

No. 744.

JANUARY 2, 1920.

6 Cents.

FAAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY.

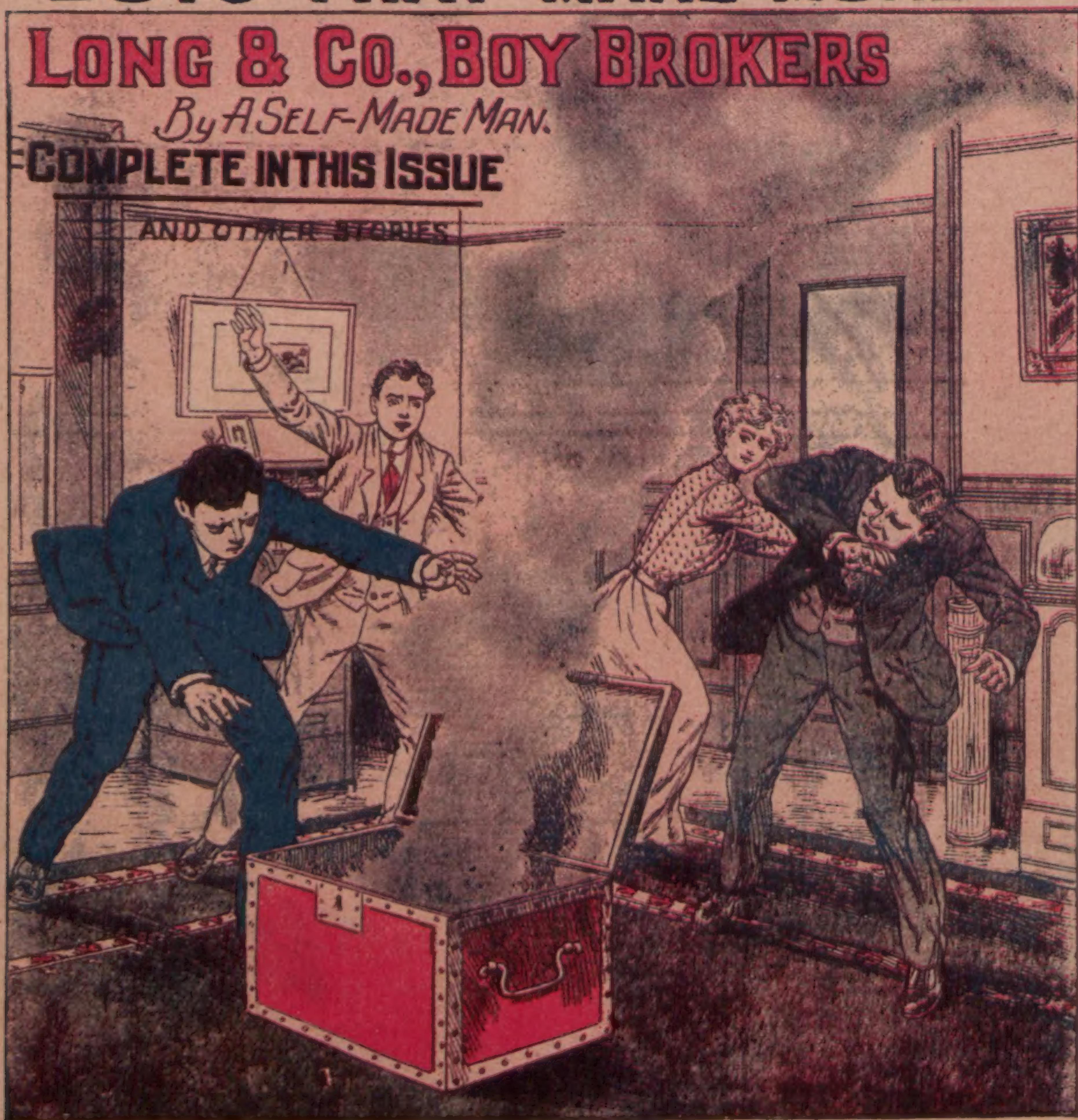
STORIES OF
BOYS THAT MAKE MONEY.

LONG & Co., BOY BROKERS

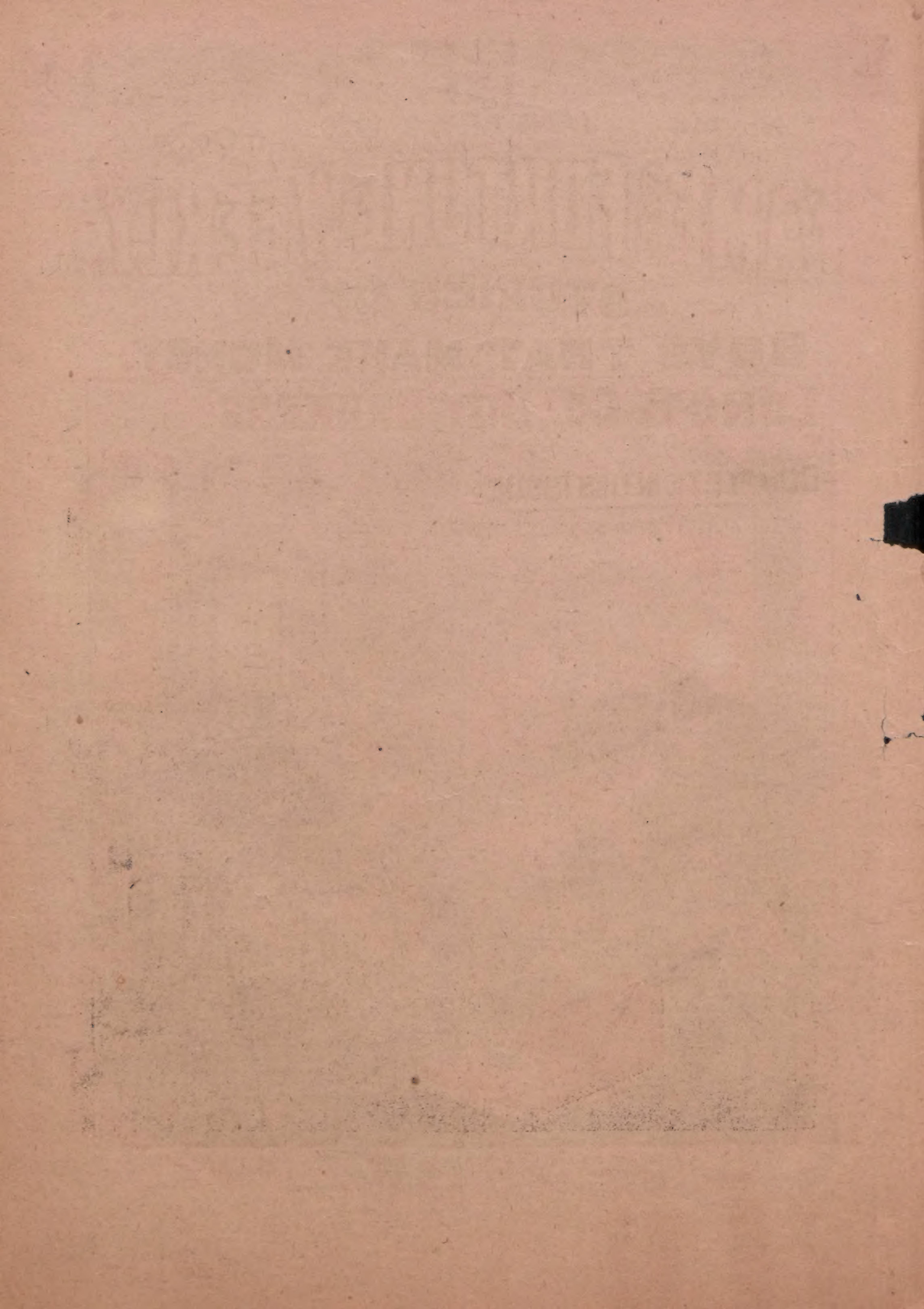
By A SELF-MADE MAN.

COMPLETE IN THIS ISSUE

AND OTHER STORIES



Johnny looked at the box a moment and then threw up the cover. A cloud of stifling smoke rose, like a balloon, out of it. "Great Scott!" exclaimed Johnny. "What is this?" The others in the room started back aghast.



FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

Issued Weekly—Subscription price, \$3.00 per year; Canada, \$3.50; Foreign, \$4.00. Harry E. Wolff, Publisher, 166 West 23d Street, New York, N. Y. Entered as Second Class Matter, October 4, 1911, at the Post-Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

No. 744.

NEW YORK, JANUARY 2, 1920.

Price 6 Cents.

TAKE NOTICE!

On account of more than 100 per cent advance in the cost of paper, additional printing and labor costs, we are reluctantly compelled to increase the price of this publication to 7 cents, beginning next week.—
THE PUBLISHER.

LONG & CO., BOY BROKERS

—OR—

A LUCKY WALL STREET FIRM

By A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.

A SAFE AND ITS CONTENTS.

"And now, gentlemen, I will take your bids on this fine steel safe and its contents," said the auctioneer, looking at the crowd which was gathered in a semi-circle around him, several deep. "It is the last lot in the programme."

"Contents!" exclaimed a man in the front row. "What do you mean by that?"

"When I say contents I naturally mean whatever is in it," replied the auctioneer, suavely.

"Well, what's in it? Gold dollars or old junk?"

The crowd laughed at this sally.

"That's a chance you bidders have to take."

"Why, that's bidding on a pig in a poke," said the man. "This wasn't advertised as a sale of unclaimed property like the express companies hold once a year."

"I am sorry, sir, but I am merely following my instructions, which was to offer this safe and contents for sale as it stands," explained the auctioneer.

"I guess the contents don't amount to a hill of beans," said the man. "I'll give twenty dollars."

"I am offered twenty dollars for this fine steel safe, which is practically as good as new, and cost \$150 a year or so ago. Twenty dollars, do I hear thirty?"

"Twenty-five," said another man.

"Thirty," raised the first bidder.

"Thirty-one," put in a third bidder.

There was a momentary pause.

"Thirty-one has been offered for this safe and its contents. Why, gentlemen, the safe itself is worth easily three times that figure. I guarantee this safe to be in first-class condition, in every respect," said the auctioneer.

That endorsement brought two bids of thirty-five and forty dollars, and then there was another pause.

"Forty dollars I am offered, do I hear forty-five? Gentlemen, the contents of this safe may be worth ten times forty dollars," said the auctioneer.

"Do you guarantee that, too?" asked the original bidder.

"Certainly not," said the auctioneer, hastily. "I don't guarantee the contents at all."

There was no further bid, though the auctioneer tried hard to raise the last offer another dollar.

At this point a well-dressed gentleman, who had been standing behind him, stepped up and whispered something in his ear.

"Gentlemen," said the auctioneer, "I have been instructed to tell you that the contents of this safe largely consists of mining and industrial stock. The reason it is offered with the safe and not in separate lots is because the deceased, whose property it was, left a request in writing that when his personal belongings in this office were sold that the safe be offered just as it stood at the moment of his untimely death. Now, gentlemen, I hope you will make a bid in keeping with the chances you have of drawing a prize. I'll guarantee the safe to be worth a hundred dollars. The contents may be worth a hundred thousand for all I know. It is possible I am offering you a fortune in disguise. I have been offered forty dollars. Who will say seventy-five?"

While the chances were that the certificates of stock, now admitted to form the contents of the safe, were of little, if any, value, the element of uncertainty injected more than ever into the proceedings brought forth bids of forty-five to sixty-five dollars, and then stopped again.

"Sixty-five dollars, gentlemen, is a mere bagatelle to offer for the chance of a small fortune," said the auctioneer, in persuasive tones. "The safe is worth more than that, and you are taking no risk whatever on the contents, even if the shares of stock are not worth the paper they are written on. Come, gentlemen, do not let what may be a good thing get away from you. Do I hear seventy-five dollars?"

"All he heard was an offer of sixty-six."

"Sixty-six. It is really a shame to let this lot go at such a ridiculously low figure. Sixty-six, do I hear Sixty-seven?" Nobody seemed eager to raise the last bid.

The bidder was a second-hand furniture man, who had already bought most of the furniture and other office fixtures.

"Sixty-six, do I hear sixty-seven?" said the auctioneer, looking around.

At that moment a bright-looking boy hurriedly entered the room and began pushing himself to the front.

"Sixty-six dollars for this fine safe and its contents. It is really a sacrifice. Sixty-six, once; sixty-six, twice—gen-

lemen, this is your last chance—your last opportunity for a possible fortune. Sixty-six—”

The auctioneer paused, as auctioneers do before knocking a lot down.

“Sixty-seven!” cried a clear boyish voice.

The crowd turned and looked at the new bidder.

He was a well-built, handsome lad, with a face full of energy and resolution—a boy who would attract favorable notice anywhere.

His face was flushed, either from exercise or subdued excitement, and his eyes sparkled with animation.

“Young man,” said the auctioneer, “did you say sixty-seven dollars for this safe and its unknown contents?”

“I did,” replied the boy.

“Who are you bidding for?”

“Myself.”

“The terms of this sale are spot cash, and the goods must be removed before noon to-morrow.”

“All right. I said sixty-seven.”

“Sixty-eight,” said the second-hand man.

“Sixty-nine,” said the boy.

“Seventy,” said the dealer.

“Seventy-five,” said the boy.

The crowd was now much interested in the rival bidders, particularly in the boy who had come in late.

They wondered what he wanted the safe for.

The gentleman behind the auctioneer, who had given the boy a searching look, whispered something to the auctioneer, which caused him to look hard at the lad.

“I am offered seventy-five dollars, but I am instructed to say that unless a hundred dollars is offered it will be withdrawn from the sale.”

That settled the second-hand man, and he started to leave the place he had occupied.

“I’ll make it a hundred, then,” said the boy, promptly.

Some man in the crowd suddenly got an idea in his head that the boy knew something about the contents of the safe, and he offered \$105.

The boy laughed.

“You’re an easy mark,” he said, and he made a bluff of leaving his place.

The man then seemed to realize that the boy was merely a kind of capper, employed to raise the bidding as high as possible.

“Gentlemen,” said the auctioneer, “I am offered one hundred and five—”

“Hold on there,” said the last bidder, “I’ll withdraw my bid. I find that I haven’t the money to pay for the safe at that price.”

The auctioneer looked disappointed and said something sarcastic.

“Young man, your bid of one hundred dollars stands, unless you want to draw out, too,” he said.

“All right, sir. I’ll stand by it.”

“You’ve got the money, have you?”

“Did you ask that question of any other bidder?” replied the boy, tartly.

“No; but you’re only a boy—”

“So were you once.”

The crowd snickered.

“My young friend—”

“I beg your pardon, sir, but I’m not your friend, young or otherwise. Please confine yourself to facts.”

This raised a general laugh at the auctioneer’s expense.

“Young man, I wish to know if you are prepared to pay for this safe if it is knocked down to you?” said the auctioneer, severely.

“Yes, sir, I am prepared to pay for it,” replied the boy. “Any more questions? I have lots of time.”

“Gentlemen, are you going to let this boy do you out of a good thing? Aren’t you going to raise his bid five or ten dollars? That’s an uncommonly smart boy, gentlemen. Look at his head. It is the head of a budding financier. Who knows but one of these days he’ll be one of our Wall Street magnates?”

The auctioneer was evidently disposed to be funny.

Probably his method of getting back at the lad who had rapped him.

The boy didn’t seem to mind it, for he never turned a hair.

“That boy has brains, gentlemen,” went on the auctioneer. “He sees this opportunity which you are letting get by you. He is getting a hundred-and-fifty-dollar safe for one hun-

dred dollars, and the possibility of a fortune thrown in. Are you going to let a clever boy outbid you?”

Evidently the crowd were, for nobody offered a fresh bid.

“Very well, gentlemen, the loss is yours. One hundred dollars once—twice—and for the third and last time.”

The auctioneer looked around, then brought his hands together with a resounding smack as he said, “Sold!”

“I wonder which is sold—the safe or the bidder,” said a man, facetiously.

“I’ll tell you,” said the boy, “the gentleman who let me bluff him out of his bid. I’ve got a bargain.”

“How do you know you have?”

“That’s one of my business secrets,” replied the boy, in a chipper way.

“Step up and settle, young man,” said the auctioneer.

The boy stepped up and handed in five \$20 notes, and asked for a bill of sale.

“Say, do you know who that chap is?” said the man who had just come in and heard that the boy had bought the safe and its contents on the “go-it-blind” principle.

“No, who is he?” asked the sarcastic man.

“That’s Johnny Long, the late Mr. Jackson’s messenger. He and the deceased were quite thick. The old man said Long was the smartest messenger in the Street, and I guess he was right. If anybody has a correct idea what is in that safe he has, and you can take my word that he wouldn’t bid on it if he didn’t know what he was doing. I’d be willing to give him \$200 for his bargain, and run the risk of getting sold,” said the man.

Several in the crowd heard his words, and they began to have regrets.

The auctioneer might have been right after all, when he remarked that there was a possible fortune in the safe.

CHAPTER II.

LONG AND COMPANY, BOY BROKERS.

After paying for the safe as it stood, and receiving the combination on a slip of paper so he could open it, and his bill of sale, from the auctioneer, Johnny Long tackled the second-hand dealer, and after considerable haggling, bought from him at a reasonable advance price everything he had purchased.

“Young man,” said the auctioneer, as the boy was starting for the door, “don’t forget that you must have this safe out of here by to-morrow noon.”

“Who says so?” replied Long.

“I say so.”

“I think you’ve had your say. You have finished your business, and when you have received your commission for services rendered you will be through, so it is unnecessary for you to issue orders to me. I don’t intend to move that safe by noon to-morrow, or the day after, either.”

“Then it will be moved and stored at your risk and expense,” replied the auctioneer.

“Who’s going to do it?”

“The superintendent of the building will probably do it, as the office is rented.”

“Perhaps you know who it is rented to?”

“I do not. It is none of my business.”

“Then I will tell you. The office is rented to the firm of Long & Co.”

“Oh, I see. A relative of yours, eh? That alters the case. Maybe you bought the safe for him. I merely called your attention to the matter of moving the safe because I was instructed to notify bidders that their purchases would have to be removed at once.”

“All right, sir. I’m much obliged to you. I believe there is nothing more to go now,” said Johnny.

“Nothing more! Everything but your safe has got to be taken away by Moxey, the Nassau street dealer.”

“Everything that Moxey bought I have re-purchased from him.”

“Have you? Got a bill of sale from him?”

“I have the bill of sale you gave him, on which he has transferred to me all his title to the various articles, with the exception of a few small things which he has taken away,” replied Johnny.

“All right, my young friend. Mr. Bixby and I will retire in a few minutes and leave you in possession of the office and your purchases.”

Nearly all the crowd had left.

A few of the more curious ones remained.

They were mostly persons who had made bids on the safe. "Say, young man," said one, acting as spokesman for the others, "aren't you going to open the safe and see whether you've struck luck?"

"No," replied Johnny. "I know about what's in it without looking."

"Do you? Are those certificates of stock worth much?"

"I don't imagine I could buy a skyscraper with them."

"I suppose you got a bargain, and we people got left?"

"If you got left it was your own fault. You had the same chance that I had to buy the safe and what was in it."

"That's all right; but we didn't have your inside knowledge of the value of what was in it. You were taking no chances, while we were."

"Well, then, for your consolation, I will inform you that the bundles of certificates of mining and industrial stock have no market value, as far as I know. If they had, Mr. Jackson probably would not have left instructions to include them in the sale of the safe. At any rate his executor would not have complied with directions that were not profitable to the estate."

"If you knew the certificates had little if any value why did you pay so much for the safe?"

"Because I need a good safe, and that one is easily worth a hundred dollars."

"You could have done better by buying one of a dealer in second-hand safes."

"Maybe I could, but I am satisfied with my purchase."

"What are you going to do with that mining and industrial stock?"

"You'll have to excuse me answering that question."

The spokesman took the hint, and he and the others walked out of the office.

They were hardly gone when a good-looking boy of Johnny's age came to the door and looked in.

"Hello, Will," said Johnny, "come in. The funeral is over and the mourners have departed. The remains have been disposed of, and we own most of them, all, in fact, that you see about you. Those two gentlemen at the desk yonder are the auctioneer and Mr. Bixby, the executor of the Jackson estate. As soon as they have finished their business they will go, too."

"Then we can open up right away," said Will, whose other name was Waters.

"Just as soon as a sign painter removes the letters now on the door and substitutes the legend of Long & Co., Stocks and Bonds. Mining and Industrial Shares Bought and Sold on Commission."

"You got the safe and its contents, then?" said Will.

"You can gamble on it I did."

"I was afraid that maybe you'd be late in getting here."

"I didn't have any time to spare. I knew it would be the last thing offered. It was on the point of passing into the hands of a second-hand dealer when I punctured his expectations with a higher bid."

"Punctured is good. One would think he was a tire."

"He looked tired when I kept on bidding against him."

"Did he, and I suppose he soon re-tired from the contest as you got the safe? What did it cost you?"

"You mean us. It cost us just one hundred cases."

"That was better than you expected to get it for?"

"It was. The executor counted on the contents boosting the sale price, but it didn't work with the crowd, at least to any great extent. They did not show any eagerness to go it blind, even when told that the contents consisted of numerous shares of mining and industrial stock. They regarded the unseen securities with suspicion and wouldn't nibble very hard."

"They couldn't have connected with the independent order of Wall Street lambs. By the way, what's the difference between a Wall Street lamb and a country lamb?"

"One has two feet and the other four," replied Johnny.

"That's true, but it isn't the difference I mean."

"What is the difference, then?"

"One gambles on the market and the other gambols on the meadows."

"That isn't bad for you. Say, my sister is something of an artist. I'll get her to embody that joke of yours in a picture, and we'll hang it up in the office for the brokers, who may visit us to admire."

"That will be great. I should like to see the product of my brain illustrated."

"Never mind that now. What alterations do you think we should make in the furniture of this room? As the head of the firm I shall have my desk by that window."

"All right. Suppose I plank the other desk at the back of yours. Then the head and tail of the firm would be in suitable juxtaposition."

"Suitable what?"

"Juxtaposition. You know what that means, don't you? Nearness."

"Holy smokes, Will! Don't jar me that way again. If you are studying the unabridged dictionary don't hurl any of it at me. Please remember that we are starting out in the brokerage business, with a small capital, and an unlimited amount of nerve, and—stick to business. I think you'd better go over to West Broadway, to that sign painter who has a loft near the elevated station, and bring a man over here to fix up the door. I'll stay here and hold the fort."

"Whatever you say goes with me, Johnny. I'll make tracks for the painter's."

Will turned on his heel and departed, and half an hour later returned with a painter, who carried a satchel in his hand.

By that time the auctioneer and the executor of the Jackson estate had gone.

Johnny handed the painter a slip with the matter he wanted put on the door, and the man began operations by taking off the old sign of "Wilford Jackson, Broker."

The late Mr. Jackson had, for a year before his death, been conducting his business on a modest basis, owing to the fact that a certain speculation he engaged in turned out so disastrously that he was nearly sent to the wall.

Johnny had been his faithful messenger and junior clerk all along, and the broker thought a great deal of the boy.

The day before he died he sent for Johnny and bade him a last good-by, for the doctors had given him up.

He told the boy that he had prepared a codicil to be attached to his will which would give John \$100 and all the old stock certificates in his safe.

"I'm not giving you much, my boy," he said, "for the stock has no market value, but if I were you I'd hold on to it, for maybe out of the bunch one or two might some day turn up a trump. At any rate that has been my anticipation, but it can't be realized now, for I am going to that mysterious hereafter where such things as stock have no place."

So when Broker Jackson died Johnny expected to receive the valueless certificates, but he didn't get them just the same, nor the \$100 either, for the codicil, for some unexplained reason, was not attached to the will, nor did the executor know anything about it.

Johnny, however, determined to get them if he could and offered to buy them for a small price.

The executor, however, had a luminous idea with respect to them and refused to sell them, though he felt they did not count as a marketable asset to the estate.

The "luminous idea" was to sell them in connection with the safe.

This plan was carried out, as we have seen, but it did not pan out the way the executor expected.

Johnny, before the sale, offered him \$50 for the certificates.

By attending the sale the boy practically got them for nothing, for the safe, which he also wanted in the business he was about to launch in partnership with his friend, Will Waters, was worth the price he paid for both.

It took the painter half an hour to remove the old sign and paint the new one.

Johnny and Will stood outside and watched the proceeding, which was very interesting to them.

When the man had finished it, the glass presented as important a front as any door on that floor, and the boys were very well satisfied.

"Long & Co.," said Will. "Although I'm only the Co. I feel just as important as if my name was there in large letters. Long may the firm flourish."

"Whether we buy or sell stock for ourselves, we are bound to be Long in the market," chuckled Johnny.

"Sure thing," grinned Will. "Now, let's go home, for we can't do anything more to-day."

"Yes we can. We'll order our printing, books and stationery, put a standing advt. in a couple of the financial papers, subscribe for several others, and arrange for a renewal of the ticker service. After that we will go home."

Accordingly the boys locked up and went off to attend to those important details.

CHAPTER III. THE WORTHLESS SECURITIES.

Johnny Long lived with an uncle and aunt in the Bronx, while Will Waters lived with his parents in Brooklyn.

The mother of Johnny, some years after the death of the boy's father had married again and was living in Boston.

Her second husband's name was Pendleton, and he was a bookkeeper in a large dry goods store.

The reason why Johnny came to New York was because he didn't get on with his new father.

He found his father's brother, Cyrus Long, very congenial to him, and as his aunt was as good to him as a mother, he got along very nicely in his new home.

He also had the company of his cousin, Kittie Long, who was a vivacious and captivating young lady of about his own age.

She and Johnny were as much alike as two peas in a pod, and sometimes the boy wished she wasn't his cousin.

Johnny appeared at the office at nine next morning, and soon afterward Will came in.

"What shall we do first, Johnny?" asked Will.

"We'll go over those stock certificates and make a schedule of them," was the reply.

The safe was opened and the certificates brought forth and dumped on Johnny's desk.

Will wrote the names down, with the number of shares of each, as his partner read them off and tied up each company in a separate bundle.

While they were thus employed a couple of brokers, who Johnny knew very well, walked in on them.

"Hello, Johnny," said Broker Howard, "this is a surprise."

"Good morning, gentlemen. Glad to see you. Help yourselves to seats and make yourselves at home. Fine day."

"We heard that you hired Jackson's office, but we hardly believed it, so Grant and I came up to see if the report was true," said Howard.

"I hope you are satisfied that it is," replied Johnny.

"The evidence is before us so we are bound to be. What are you doing with all those certificates of stock? You've got enough of them to stock a safe. You haven't been burgling somebody's safe deposit box, have you?" laughed the trader.

"We bought these yesterday of the executor of the Jackson estate."

"What, all of them?"

"Yes, sir; all of them."

"You must have a lot of capital or else they can't be worth much."

"Mr. Jackson bought them for good money at various times but when he needed money he couldn't realize on them," said Johnny.

Then they don't amount to much."

"They'll make a good bluff, that's about all; but you needn't circulate the fact, for it would only raise a laugh against us. We're not in business just to furnish amusement for Wall Street. It is as serious a matter with us as your business is with you."

"Oh, we won't hold you up to ridicule. If we can help you in any way call on either of us. But I am not sure that that's a wise move on your part, Johnny. It costs money to occupy an office in this building, and if you don't do enough business to justify the expense, you'll come out at the small end of the horn."

"That's no fiction, Mr. Howard; but if we don't keep on top it won't be for the want of trying. We have capital enough to give us a start, and with a reasonable amount of luck, we expect to pull through."

"Well, we wish you luck. What stock is that over there?"

"That big bunch? The Little Giant Mining & Milling Co. Mr. Jackson was heavily interested in it. When the company went on the fritz, something over a year ago, my late boss got such a soak in the financial solar plexus that he had to give up his suite of rooms in the Astor and take this modest office in the Arlington."

"The stock isn't worth anything now. What are you going to do with it?"

"Keep it. There are 100,000 shares represented in that bunch. Maybe we'll buy up enough of the balance that was issued to control the property."

"What good would that do you?"

"I couldn't tell you now; but it would be something to say that we owned a mining proposition out West, even if there was nothing in it."

"Rather an empty honor. I would advise you not to waste any of your money on it."

"We couldn't waste much, for the stock has no value, consequently, if we started to accumulate any more of it we wouldn't pay much for it."

"If you paid a cent a share every cent invested would be a dead loss."

"You can't tell what might happen in the future. I've heard of dead mines coming to life again in an unexpected way."

"True; but such things don't happen once in a coon's age with such propositions as the Little Giant. How many shares would you have to buy to get control of the property?"

"Fifty thousand one hundred."

"Then you hold a third interest in it now?"

"We do."

"I wouldn't monkey with it. One of these days when you get older and wiser you'll use those certificates to figure on. That's about all the use they're good for. What else have you got there?"

"Ten thousand shares of the Imperial Invisible Ink Co. Worth \$10 a share at par. I believe Mr. Jackson paid 25 cents a share for the block. He expected that the company would make a lot of money out of their patents."

"What is the company doing?"

"Nothing that I know of."

"How about the plant?"

"It occupies part of a small loft on Grand street, and the president and patentee is the only active worker. He sells the product around the streets on a push cart, and he barely pays his expenses. The palatial palace he told Mr. Jackson he expected to build one day out of his share of the profits has contracted to a small room in the Mills House No. 1. Instead of dining at Delmonico's he eats on the Bowery or Park Row. In fact, he lunched at my expense on Ann street the other day. If he hadn't met me he told me that he wouldn't have eaten at all, for he'd only sold one bottle of ink that morning."

"How much will you sell the Imperial for?" laughed Broker Grant.

"I think a cent a share would be a fair valuation, banking on the future," replied Johnny.

"The present prospects of the company do not warrant such a figure. If you found a purchaser willing to pay a tenth of a cent I'd advise you to work it off," said the broker.

"That would be \$10 for that bunch of handsome-looking securities. What an appalling sacrifice! No, I'd rather paper my room with them."

"I suppose the rest of your stock is on the same plane with those you have mentioned?" said Howard.

"Yes, I guess they are," said Johnny, looking rather regretfully at the piles of valueless certificates, which had once represented hopeful enterprise. "They are dead ones, but on the chance of one of the corpses coming back to a sphere of usefulness we intend to keep them."

The two brokers smiled.

"Why don't you frame one of each variety and hang them about your office? They might be ornamental if not useful."

"I will consider your suggestion, Mr. Howard, and perhaps act on it. As most of them represent mining companies they might add an air of importance to the place that would impress strangers," chuckled Johnny.

"That's right," laughed Howard, and then he and Grant got up and said they would have to get to their offices.

"Here, Will, put these securities in the safe," said Johnny.

"Securities is good. They'll be secure there even if they're not worth anything," replied Will, following directions.

Johnny picked up a mining paper which had been delivered that morning and glanced over it.

The following paragraph struck his eye:

"The Henrietta Gold and Silver Mine.—Some weeks since we printed an item to the effect that this defunct mine had changed hands, and that a new company had been organized to take over the property. About 40,000 shares of treasury stock were sold two or three years ago at from five to ten cents a share, and the money thus obtained was used for de-

velopment purposes. The results were not encouraging enough to warrant the original promoters continuing the work, and so the operations were abandoned and the mine took its place among the hundreds of wildcat propositions which have contributed so much to weaken public confidence in the general mining industry. We are now informed that the new people in charge have opened up an unsuspected vein of ore, specimens of which assay at about \$100 a ton. This doesn't suggest a bonanza, but it wears a hopeful look. Whether the mine will ultimately realize the expectations now being formed of it is a problem for the future to solve, but at least it will be good news for those people who hold some of the shares in the original company."

"The Henrietta," muttered Johnny. "Why, we have a bunch of that stock."

He consulted the list made out by Will.

It showed that the firm owned 20,000 shares.

"Say, Will," called Johnny.

"Hello," replied the junior partner.

"Fetch me that bunch of Henrietta certificates."

Will did so.

"Now read that paragraph."

Will read it.

"Say, how much have we got of it?" said Will, eagerly. Johnny pointed to the list.

"Gee, that's fine!" exclaimed Will. "We may be right in it with that stock."

"If it pans out anything we can count ourselves a lucky Wall Street firm."

CHAPTER IV.

TWO MORE VISITORS.

At that moment there came a knock on the door. "Come in," said Johnny.

In walked a broker who was a neighbor of theirs.

He had attended the sale on the afternoon before and had seen Johnny buy the safe and its unseen contents.

He was curious to learn what the stock consisted of, and he had a reason for wishing to know, too.

"Good morning, young man," he said to Johnny. "My name is Watt."

"I give it up, sir. You ought to know better than me."

The visitor stared at the boy broker.

"I don't catch the drift of your remark," he said.

"You asked me what your name was, and I—"

"I said my name was Watt—W-A-double T."

"Oh, I beg your pardon. Glad to know you, Mr. Watt. Sit down."

"I am a broker on this floor and therefore a neighbor of yours."

Johnny nodded.

"You seem to have started in the brokerage business with a partner."

"Seem to have started! Why, we have started. You saw our sign on the door?"

"Of course. Is this young man here your partner?"

"Yes, sir. Allow me to make you acquainted with Mr. Waters. Will, this is Broker Watt."

"Pleased to make your acquaintance, Mr. Watt," said Will.

"I was present yesterday when you bought that safe with its enigmatical contents," said the caller.

Will grinned at his partner.

"So I thought I'd drop in and see what kind of a bargain you got," added the broker.

"He's got a nerve," thought Will, winking at Johnny.

"It is rather too soon for us to find out whether we got a bargin or not," replied the senior partner.

"Have you a list of the certificates? I might be of use to you in pointing out if any of them have a value," said the visitor, blandly.

"There is the list we have just made out," said Johnny, handing him the paper.

Broker Watt glanced over it, and his eyes sparkled when they lighted on Henrietta.

"I'm afraid there is nothing on the list that is worth anything," he said, handing it back. "Stop—let me see it again. Henrietta. I think I could sell that lot for you if you want to get rid of it. There was a man in my office yesterday who said he'd like to get about 25,000 shares. He said he'd be willing to give a cent a share for it. That would give you a little profit on your safe purchase," and the speaker a keen and expectant look on Johnny.

"Yes, it would," replied the boy broker, slowly. "We would get twice our money back and still have the safe."

"Exactly," said the broker, briskly. "Shall I write you my check for \$200?"

"Well, no. I don't think we care to sell Henrietta."

"Why not?" asked their visitor, looking disappointed.

"Really, I prefer not to explain our reasons. If there is anything else on the list—"

"No, there is nothing else," replied Mr. Watt, impatiently.

"Sorry. There are 10,000 shares of Imperial Invisible Ink Co. which—"

"Don't want them," snorted Mr. Watt, who looked a little mad.

"There are 5,000 shares of the International Duplex Corrugated—"

"I can only use the Henrietta stock," interrupted Broker Watt.

"How about the Red Sox mine?"

"Nothing in it."

"What do you know about the Hilltop Extension?"

"Nothing," said the broker, shortly.

"The New Eldorado Mining and—"

"Dead as a door nail. There's nothing in your list worth a cent."

"Don't you think that the Little Giant will come to life some—"

"No, I don't. I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll give you \$250 for those Henrietta shares."

"Make it \$500 and I'll consider the offer."

"Look here, young man, do you take me for a fool?" roared Watt.

"I should hope not. The only fools in Wall Street seem to be the lambkins."

"Then don't suggest such a ridiculous price as two and a half cents a share. It isn't worth what I offer you."

"Then why do you make the offer?"

"I told you that a customer of mine wanted it."

"Oh, I see."

"I wouldn't touch it with a ten-foot pole myself."

"But they say it's coming to life."

"Who says so?" asked the broker, sharply.

"There's a paragraph in this paper about it. Read it."

"All rot."

"How can you say that until you have read the item?"

"I read it a while ago. There is nothing in it."

"Your customer must think there is something in the mine or he wouldn't ask you to buy 25,000 shares for him."

"That's my customer's business, not mine. So you won't sell what you have?"

"Not at the present moment."

"Then I will wish you a good morning," and Mr. Watt got up and departed.

"He went out mad," grinned Will.

"I can't help that. He had no reason to get mad because we wouldn't sell the Henrietta shares."

"You irritated him going over that list of bonehead propositions," laughed Will.

Johnny chuckled and shoved the list into a pigeon-hole.

"Here, you can return the Henrietta to the safe. Keen it apart from the rest. We may get a nickel a share for it yet," said the boy broker.

"I think I'll go out and get a sun bath," said Will, reaching for his hat.

"Where are you going?"

"Up to the little bank to watch the blackboard."

"If you see anything that looks good telephone me."

"I will."

As Will started for the door it opened and admitted Kittie Long.

"Why, hello, Kittie, what brought you down to Wall Street," cried Johnny, jumping up and offering his fair visitor a chair.

"What do you suppose?" she replied, saucily. "I came to inspect your office."

"And my partner, I suppose," laughed the boy broker. "Kittie, let me make you acquainted with Will Waters. Will, this is my cousin, Miss Long. You've heard me speak of her."

Will bowed and took Kittie's gloved hand as if he was afraid of breaking it.

"You've got quite a place here, Johnny," said the girl. "Dear me, don't you want to employ me in some capacity?"

"Nothing would give us greater pleasure if we had something for you to do."

"Oh, that wouldn't make any difference with me. I could sit here and look pretty, and draw my wages on Saturday," she laughed.

"I'll bet you could do all those things to the queen's taste. I suppose you'd like to choose your own office hours?"

"Well, I wouldn't want to come down before eleven, and I should like to go home whenever I felt like it."

"Say, Kitty, there's nothing slow about you. When we get wealthy we'll consider your application," said Johnny.

"Oh, I'll be married by that time," laughed the girl, with a demure look at Will, tapping the rug with the shapely toe of her boot.

"I hope that won't be soon, for I don't want to lose you," said Johnny.

"I thought you were tired of me."

"Couldn't get tired of you to save my life. You spring a new surprise on me every day."

"Do I? Then my appearance here is to-day's surprise."

"It certainly is, but a most delightful one, I assure you."

"Dear me, you said that very nice. I believe I shall be able to make something of you after all."

"You said that very nice yourself. So you think we have a nice office?"

"Yes, indeed. You boys look like real men of business."

"Thanks. We flatter ourselves that we are."

"I thought you had a little room, just big enough to hold two desks and one small visitor like myself."

"Oh, you did? Well, you see we amount to something more than that."

"It must cost you something for this office."

"We don't get the use of it for nothing. Offices in this building are rented by the square foot."

"What do you mean by that?"

"The company that owns the building figures out the rent according to the number of square feet of available space on each floor."

"How many square feet have you?"

"We haven't measured it. All I can tell you is that there are six feet resting on it."

"You mean our feet? Aren't you too witty for anything?"

"Say, Kitty, how long are you going to stay?"

"Am I in the way? If I am—"

"Not at all. Your presence is like a beam of sunshine. The reason I asked is if you will remain long enough we'll take you out to lunch."

"How nice! Will you take me to Delmonico's?"

"Delmonico's! Say, you've got a nerve, Kittie. Wait till we do a little business before striking us as hard as that. We'll take you to a nice restaurant on Broadway."

"It's too early to talk about lunch—only eleven o'clock. I've promised to meet mother at a department store at twelve sharp. You'll have to excuse me this time. I'll make a date with you for lunch some time, and allow you to spread yourself."

Kittie remained ten minutes longer and then said she'd have to go.

Will offered to see her as far as a Broadway car, and she accepted his escort.

They went off together and Johnny took up the mining paper.

CHAPTER V.

THE BLUFF THAT DIDN'T WORK.

Several days passed, during which time a number of traders visited the boy brokerage firm to find out, if possible, what they were doing to justify their claim that they were brokers.

Most of the visitors regarded Long & Co. as a joke.

As far as the brokers could see the boys were not doing anything.

It was believed that the lads had come into a little money, and being afflicted with swelled heads, had opened up the office.

The general impression was that they wouldn't last long.

The boy brokers received their visitors politely, entertained them in a genial way, and answered most of the questions put to them quite frankly.

On the whole, the boy firm accumulated a certain amount of popularity and were talked about from one end of Wall Street to the other.

Another attempt was made by Broker Watt to buy their Henrietta shares.

He did not call on them again himself, but sent one of his clerks with an offer of two and a half cents a share.

The offer was not supposed to come from him.

The clerk was instructed to represent himself as a man who was looking for the stock, and the trader gave him \$500 cash to pay for the certificates in case the boy traders were in a mood to sell.

It happened, however, that just before the clerk called Johnny noticed another item in the mining paper about the mine.

It confirmed the previous statement that ore had been found on the property, and advised those persons who had shares in their possession to hold on to them, pending further developments.

The clerk's mission was, therefore, a failure, as Johnny told him the firm did not need money bad enough to be in a rush to sell the Henrietta stock even at five cents a share, which was twice as much as their visitor was authorized to offer.

That same day, Bixby, the executor of the Jackson estate, called in.

He asked Johnny if he didn't find some shares of the Henrietta mining stock among the certificates in the safe he bought.

"Yes, sir."

"How many were there?"

"Twenty thousand."

"Just as I thought. I will have to ask you to turn them over to me."

"Turn them over to you! What for?"

"They belong to the estate and should not have been in the safe at the time of the sale."

"I can't help that, sir. I bought the safe and its contents, and you were present and concurred in the sale when the auctioneer knocked the lot down to me."

"That's all right, but the Henrietta shares were not intended to be included in the sale."

"Then you should have removed them from the safe before allowing it to be put up at auction."

"I confess it was an oversight on my part, but I must get them back, for I am responsible to the estate for them."

"You can have them back at ten cents a share."

"I do not propose to pay for them," said Bixby, tartly.

"Do you expect me to give them to you for nothing?"

"I do."

"Excuse me saying so, but I think you have a lot of nerve to make such a request."

"Nerve or not I demand their return."

"Your demand cuts no ice with this firm whatever. We bought the stock and we're going to hold on to it for whatever we can get for it," replied Johnny.

"You refuse to turn those certificates over to me?"

"I do."

"Very well, young man. I am a lawyer and will take immediate measures to compel you to give them up."

"All right. If you can force us to give them up you're a good one. We know our rights in this matter, though we are not even budding lawyers, and we shall defend any action you may bring against us."

"You put on a bold front, young man."

"No more than I have a right to. I'm ready to bet that you won't find a judge who will give a decision in your favor."

"What do you know about the law?" sneered the executor.

"Nothing; but I know what justice is. We hold possession of those certificates and that's nine points of the law to begin with. The burden of proof will rest with you. Can you deny that we bought that stock fairly and squarely?"

"No; but I can show that it was sold through a mistake."

"If it was through a mistake the mistake was yours, and we are not responsible for it. How is it you have waited a whole week before coming to us about it?"

"I have just discovered that the Henrietta shares are missing."

"Then you didn't know they were in the safe at the time of the sale?"

"Certainly not. If I had I should have taken them out."

Johnny got up and went to the safe, not to take out the Henrietta certificates, but to get a penciled memorandum he had found among the discarded stock.

Returning to his desk he held it up before the executor to look at.

"Is that your writing, sir?"

"It looks something like it, but I am not certain," replied the lawyer.

"Well, that's your signature, isn't it?"

Bixby was obliged to admit that it was.

"Very good. Let me read this memoranda. This is what it says: 'I find that the following stocks are worthless and of no value to the estate.' A list of the stock follows, and among them is the Henrietta. What have you to say now?"

Bixby was clearly taken back by this piece of evidence in his own handwriting.

"I should not have included the Henrietta in that list," he said, in a lame way. "It was a mistake of mine."

"That is two mistakes you admit having committed. Really, Mr. Bixby, for a lawyer, your accuracy is not to be commended."

The executor flushed angrily.

"Well," he said, "I am willing to admit that you have some title to this Henrietta stock, but not enough to hold it in a court of equity. Rather than put you to the expense of defending an action I will give you \$100 for the stock."

"One hundred dollars! Why, I have just refused \$250 for the shares because my partner and I value them at \$1,000."

"They're not worth any such money," exclaimed the lawyer.

"What do you value them at?"

"At the utmost, \$500."

"You are wrong. They are not worth a cent in my stock market. The Henrietta mine was taken off the Goldfield Exchange a long time ago, and it never was listed as anything but a prospect. Though sold by promoters at five and ten cents a share it was never quoted higher than three."

"You pretend to know a lot about this stock."

"I have taken the trouble to look it up. That is my business, and I try not to make mistakes in my line. Now, Mr. Bixby, isn't it a fact that the reason you have taken such a sudden interest in Henrietta is because of the recent reports that have appeared about it in certain Western papers, and incidentally in the financial journals of this city?"

"Nonsense!" replied the lawyer, with a flush.

"Do you mean to say that you haven't seen those reports?"

"I decline to say whether I have or not."

"That is, I take it, as good as an admission that you have."

"It is no admission. Will you sell me those certificates for \$100?"

"I will not."

"Then you shall hear from the surrogate on the subject."

"Very well. I am ready to explain my side of the question. If he holds any one accountable for the stock he will hold the executor, and that's yourself."

With an exclamation of angry disappointment the visitor rose from the chair and started for the door.

"Good-day, Mr. Bixby," said Johnny, pleasantly.

The lawyer declined to notice his words, opening the door with a jerk and slamming it after him.

Johnny chuckled.

"I doubt if he will take any legal action to try and recover that Henrietta stock, for I don't see that he has any case. I can easily prove that I bought the entire contents of the safe with that article. I am glad I saved that memoranda with his signature attached. That shows he did not leave the Henrietta certificates in the safe through an oversight, as he pretended he did. It's as clear as sunlight that his interest in the Henrietta shares began from the moment he learned that the mine was beginning to attract attention again. He thought because he is a lawyer that he could bulldoze me into giving the certificates up. I guess he knows better now."

Johnny then turned his attention to the perusal of the daily stock report.

CHAPTER VI.

CONCERNING THE IMPERIAL INVISIBLE INK CO.

On the following day Johnny noticed that D. & O. stock was going up in a steady kind of way.

The market was generally bullish, and an advance all along the line was looked for.

The result was Wall Street was full of "lambs" looking for easy money.

They thronged the reception-rooms of the different broker-

age offices, and Johnny found a mob of battle-scarred veterans in the little bank when he pushed his way in.

The entire capital of the firm of Long & Co. amounted to about \$1,200, after a month's office rent had been paid, and the furniture and other things had been settled for.

Johnny put up \$1,000 of this sum as marginal security on 100 shares of D. & O. at 82, and then sat on a bench to watch the course of the market.

He remained there till one o'clock, by which time the stock had gone up two points, then he went to lunch.

Before returning to the little bank he dropped in at his office.

Will was holding the fort.

"Had your lunch, Will?" he asked.

"Yes. I patronized the quick-lunch at the rear of this building on Pine street, and I wasn't out over fifteen minutes."

"Had any visitors?"

"Broker W-A double T was in and made me an offer of five cents a share for Henrietta certificates. I told him I would submit his offer to you when you came in. What do you think about it?"

"If it's worth \$1,000 to him I guess it's worth that much to us."

"Then we don't sell, eh?"

"Not at present."

"It would almost double our present capital, and it would be all clear profit."

"We may double our capital on D. & O. which I went into this morning. I purchased 100 shares at 82, and when I went to lunch it was up to 84. Look at the tape and see what it is going at now."

Will looked and announced that the last quotation was 84 5-8.

"It's going up steadily, so we ought to make a pretty good profit out of it."

"Say, Johnny, I have an idea."

"Have you? I'm glad to hear it. What is it?"

"It's about that Imperial Invisible Ink Co."

"What about it?"

"As the case stands now the president, who you say is the picture of hard luck, is about the whole company."

Johnny nodded.

"How many shares of stock did he sell when he promoted the company?"

"I couldn't tell you."

"What did you say his name was?"

"Thomas Fenton."

"He invented that particular ink, I believe?"

"Yes. He got out the patent on it, and turned it into the company in return for the controlling interest. He formed the company in order to get money to buy a plant and put the ink on the market after it was manufactured under his supervision."

"You said that Mr. Jackson paid 25 cents a share, or \$2,500 for the 10,000 shares that now belong to us."

"That's right."

"Did Fenton get that money?"

"I suppose he did."

"The company was duly incorporated under the laws of this State with a capital placed at \$1,000,000—100,000 shares of a par value of \$10 each. Fenton evidently had expansive ideas about the Imperial. I believe it takes three or four persons to incorporate a company at the start. I wonder if your late boss was one of them?"

"I believe he was. He took a great deal of interest in the company at first. He was on the board of directors and was elected vice-president."

"I suppose you have no idea who the other officers were?"

"No; but they were doubtless friends of Fenton, or people whom he succeeded in interesting in his project."

"Whatever stock was sold evidently went at a quarter a share, for that was the price you say Mr. Jackson paid, and we may assume he paid no more nor less than any other stockholder. Fenton retained, we will say, 51,000 shares himself—the controlling interest. That left 49,000 shares to be sold to furnish the working capital needed to start the company going. If they were all sold at 25 cents a share the sum of \$12,000 would have been realized. Not a very large cash investment for a million-dollar corporation."

"I should say not," laughed Johnny. "But what are you getting at?"

"Well, you see we have 10,000 shares of this company's stock and ought to have something to say about that plant

on Grand street. If all the officers and shareholders have dropped out, because the enterprise has proven a failure, and left Fenton in possession of the business, which does not belong to him, but to the company, of which we are a part, wouldn't it be a good idea for us to look into the business and see if we can't make something out of it?"

"What's your idea—reorganize the company?"

"Yes, if we thought it would pay to do it. Let's get Fenton down here and talk the matter over. As things stand with him he's hardly making a cheap living. He'll be glad if we can show him how to do better. If things are allowed to go on, he may sell the plant for whatever it will bring, put the money in his pocket and skip."

"It's a wonder he hasn't done that, for the last time I saw him he was on his last legs."

"When did you see him last?"

"About a month ago."

"He might have sold the plant since."

"Easily. There was nobody that I know of, to prevent him."

"Then if we're going to act in this matter we ought to do it right away."

"We'll walk up to the plant this afternoon when I come back from the little bank, and if it is still there, and we can get in, we'll see what Fenton's invisible ink preparation really amounts to. I imagine that the reason the company was a failure was because there is no paying market for the article."

"You've got to advertise extensively to work up a market for anything these days. I suppose the company's limited capital, after deducting the money necessary to purchase the plant and a quantity of the raw material needed for producing a supply of the ink, did not warrant the outlay which advertising properly called for."

"Very likely. Well, think out your scheme while I'm away, and if we find we can make anything out of it, we will tackle it," said Johnny, starting for the door.

When the Exchange closed at three, D. & O. had advanced to 86.

Johnny was well satisfied with the outlook, for the firm was \$400 ahead on the deal so far.

He started back for the office.

Standing on the corner of Nassau and Wall streets was a shabby-looking man with a tray in front of him, resting on a portable three-legged stand.

The tray was spread with small bottles containing a pale white liquid.

A printed sign hung from the front of the stand bearing the following words:

"Imperial Invisible Ink. Price, 10 cents."

The sign caught Johnny's eye and then he looked at the vendor.

As he expected, that individual was Thomas Fenton.

"Hello, Fenton," he said, walking up to him.

"How de do, Johnny. Who you workin' for now?"

"Long & Co., brokers, financiers, promoters, capitalists in the perspective, and so forth, and so on ad libitum," replied Johnny, briskly.

"Your name is Long, ain't it?" said Fenton.

"Nothing surer, old man."

"Then you're workin' for a relative of yours?"

"Guess again and maybe you'll hit it," laughed the boy.

"Ain't he a relative?"

"I'm workin' for myself."

"You don't mean it!"

"Come now, close up your shop and come with me. The firm of Long & Co. wants to have a talk with you."

Fenton grinned like a man who felt he was being jolted.

"Gather up your stock and come along up to my office. My partner and I wish to hold a pow-wow with you."

Johnny didn't look as if he was fooling, and Fenton said:

"What do you want to see me about?"

"Business connected with the Imperial Invisible Ink Co."

"The company has busted."

"Has it? I'm sorry to hear it. Has the office of the Secretary of the State been notified to that effect?"

"Not that I know of."

"Then the company isn't busted, legally, and its officers are liable to be called on at any time for a report of its financial condition."

"There ain't no officers any more."

"I thought you was the president?"

"I was till the company stopped doin' business."

"You seem to be selling some of its stock."

"Yes."

"And you're using the company's plant to make it, aren't you?"

"There ain't no more company, so the plant belongs to me."

"What became of your stockholders?"

"Dunno."

"My late esteemed boss, Mr. Jackson, had 10,000 shares and was vice-president."

Fenton nodded.

"That represented a tenth interest in the company's property. I suppose that it did not occur to you when you learned of Mr. Jackson's death that the executor of his estate would want to know something about the Imperial Invisible Ink Co."

Fenton looked uneasy.

"Has he been asking you about it?"

"No, he hasn't. He didn't think the company was worth investigating."

Fenton looked relieved.

"So he sold the stock, with other securities, to me and my partner for a small sum."

Fenton grinned.

"What did you buy it for? There ain't nothin' in it. I ain't hardly makin' a livin' out of the stuff. Nobody seems to want invisible ink. I sold ten of these bottles to-day. That's a dollar. What's that? I owe three months' rent on the loft and expect to be dispossessed. I'll have to sell the plant to a junk man and take up with some other business."

"You come with me to the office now, and maybe the firm will help you out. We have a tenth interest in the plant, and if you sold it without our permission we could have you arrested and brought before a magistrate, so it wouldn't be safe for you to dispose of it on the quiet. Any other stockholder could proceed against you in the same way. The plant doesn't belong to you, but to the company, and the company is still in existence, even if it's bankrupt, whether you think so or not."

CHAPTER VII.

INSPECTING THE INK COMPANY'S PLANT.

Fenton looked bewildered.

Johnny spoke like a person who knew what he was talking about, and as his listener had very crude ideas on the subject, even though he was the head of the company in question, he was all up in the air.

"Close up and come with me," said Johnny.

"I can't afford to miss the chance of a sale," protested Fenton.

"Never mind that. I'll see that you don't suffer. Come along."

So Fenton, wondering what was in the wind, returned his stock in trade to his grip, folded up his stand, and grabbing it under his left arm, accompanied Johnny to the Arlington building.

The boy broker led him into the elevator, which presently dumped them out on the sixth floor, and in another minute they entered the office of Long & Co.

"Well, this is Thomas Fenton, president of the Imperial Invisible Ink Co.," said Johnny. "Take that chair, Fenton."

Fenton took it after depositing his stand against the wall and his grip on the floor.

"This is a fine office," he said. "Do you rent it?"

"Who else? Our sign is on the door and there is one of our cards," said Johnny.

Fenton hadn't noticed the sign on the door particularly, but he read the card.

"Are you and your partner in the brokerage business?" he asked.

"The card says so, doesn't it?"

"I was in this buildin' once to see Mr. Jackson. He had a room about the size of this. You were with him then."

"This is the office he occupied."

"Is it? I thought it looked familiar."

"It ought to, for the same furniture is in it that was here when you called about a year ago."

"Then you bought him out? You must have money," said Fenton, regarding the boy with a newly-born respect.

"You can't do business in Wall Street on hot air long."

"I should opine net. It's a great surprise to me to see you way up in the world. If the company had been the success I anticipated I would have been rich myself; but it wasn't, more's the pity," and the speaker sighed.

"Now, Fenton, let's get down to business. How many shares do you hold in the Imperial?"

"What's the use of talkin' about that? The stock ain't worth the paper it's writ on," replied the man.

"Will you kindly answer my question?"

"Fifty-one thousand. I kept the controlling interest in return for my patent rights."

"That left 49,000 shares to be sold," went on Johnny. "Mr. Jackson bought 10,000. Who did you sell the rest to?"

"Mr. Jackson sold them to friends of his—all but 9,000 shares."

"Oh, he did. Where are the company's books?"

"Up at the shop on Grand street."

"Who were the other officers besides you and Mr. Jackson? The secretary and the treasurer, I mean?"

"Don't let's talk about him," said Fenton, with a mournful look.

"Who do you mean by him?"

"The secretary and treasurer."

"Did one person fill both offices?"

"He did, till he skipped."

"Skipped!" cried Johnny, looking at his partner.

"Yes. That's what busted the company. He run off with the money on hand."

"Who was he?"

"My brother-in-law."

Johnny whistled.

"So your brother-in-law was connected with the company?"

"I gave him 5,000 of my shares so he could qualify for office."

"He could have qualified with five shares as well as 5,000. The heavy holding you had naturally elected him. So he betrayed his trust and ran away with the company's funds?"

Fenton nodded sadly.

"What did the minor stockholders have to say to that?"

"We held a meetin' and Mr. Jackson got out a warrant for his arrest."

"Was he arrested?"

"No. The police couldn't find him."

"The company couldn't go on for lack of funds, I suppose?"

"Yes. We couldn't raise no more money. The stock was not payable, which was a good thing for me, as I couldn't have paid no assessment. At any rate the men Mr. Jackson got into it were disgusted, and said they were through. So that was the end of the company. I've run the plant since, trying to pay the rent of the loft and make a livin', but it's been hard scratchin', and I owe three months' rent, as I told you before."

"I hope that you understand now that the plant isn't yours? You have only a half interest in it and in your patent rights."

"I don't care. It wouldn't fetch much from a junk man. If somebody wanted to continue the business it would be worth buyin', for it's in good shape to be run."

"How much rent is owing on the loft?"

"Forty-five dollars. The rent is \$15 a month."

"Who is the landlord?"

"The man who has a shop on the ground floor. He owns the buildin' and rents out the upper floors in lofts."

"The plant, I believe, only occupies a part of a loft?"

"The back part of the top floor."

"We'll go up there and take a look at it. I also want to see the company's books."

"Do you think of doin' anythin' with the plant?"

"Positiv'. It will depend on what arrangements we can make with you."

"I'm open to any offer that'll give me a decent livin'. As you own Mr. Jackson's stock you have somethin' to say about the plant, but you must recollect that I have a half interest in it."

"What good is your half interest to you at the present moment?"

"Not much good."

"So I thought," said Johnny, getting up. "Come, let's be givin'."

So the three walked down to Hanover street and took a Third Avenue elevated train.

They got out at the Grand street station and Fenton

piled the way to the building where the defunct I. I. I. Co had its plant on the top floor back.

There was no elevator in the building and of necessity they had to walk up.

When they reached the top floor the door facing them bore a tin sign marked:

"Imperial Invisible Ink Co. No Admittance."

Fenton produced a key and admitted them to the room, which was divided by a partition.

The manufacturing plant was in the larger of the two compartments.

The smaller room had the appearance of a rough office.

The boys looked the place over with critical eyes, while Fenton explained how he made the ink.

The three then adjourned to the smaller room.

"Now, where are the books?" asked Johnny.

Fenton produced them from a drawer in the desk.

The small one was a "Record."

On the first page was a list of the stockholders, nine all told, giving their business address, and the number of shares (including the numbers of their certificate) each had purchased.

On the third and fourth pages were the "Minutes" of the first meeting of the shareholders, detailing the election of a board of directors.

Five of the nine stockholders were chosen.

The fifth page contained the brief proceedings of the directors, consisting chiefly of the selection of the officers of the company.

Fenton was elected president, Jackson, vice-president, and Simms, Fenton's brother-in-law, secretary and treasurer.

There were no further entries in the book.

The other book contained a record of the money paid in for stock, the money paid out for the plant, and the running expenses up to a certain point, all in Simms's hand writing.

The book was balanced in Jackson's writing, and showed the amount that should have been paid out to the credit of the company, but which had been paid with Simms.

"We'll take these books to our office," said Johnny.

Fenton made no objection.

"The company is practically bankrupt," went on the boy broker. "There is nothing in the treasury but 9,000 shares of unsold stock, and the only other asset is the plant, which is of little value except for the purpose it was bought for. What blank certificates of stock have you, Fenton?"

The man opened a drawer and produced a flat bundle.

"We'll take them," said Johnny. "Now, Fenton, the 5,000 shares of your own stock that you transferred to your brother-in-law must be counted a part of the company's assets. Probably it is all the company will be able to recover. That makes 14,000 shares of unsold stock in the treasury. To prevent the plant from being disposed of, I and Co. will advance \$15 for rent due and \$15 more for another month, plus \$40 to be charged to expense account, making \$100 advanced by us, and we will take all on the plant as security for the money. Make out a paper to that effect. Will, and Fenton will sign it as president of the company."

Will could not understand, without having much idea what all this was leading to.

"My brother will call on Fenton tomorrow and fix up the rent question," said Johnny. "This is all I have for you, Fenton. Buy a new suit of clothes, and whatever else you may need, but be sure to have enough of it to lay for a couple of weeks before I'll be back. You can get in every time making up some stock if you have material on hand to do it with."

"Are you going to start the company up again?" asked Fenton.

"It will all depend on circumstances. At any rate you will not need to work for a couple of weeks. Before the day expires we will let you know what we have decided to do."

That ended matters for that afternoon.

Johnny took charge of the two books and Fenton accompanied them to the Powery.

The bus started at the foot of the mountain, and Johnny took an express to the Powery, while Will took a train down to the Brooklyn Bridge.

Half a dozen letters, delivered by the mail carrier, lay on the floor.

Johnny gathered them up and took them to his desk.

"I expect to be away out of town, who had seen the news of the D. & O. in the financial papers."

One enclosed a draft for \$500 with instructions for the firm to buy D. & O. stock with it.

The others wanted information on the stock market.

Johnny turned the letters over to Will to look after.

"Call on Howard and get the order to buy 50 shares that man wants. Howard will divide the commission with us," said Johnny. "The other letters you will answer as your judgment dictates."

"What do you think of the little bank now?" asked Will.

"In a few minutes, after we have a talk about the Imperial Invisible Ink Co., I'll tell the senior partner. You brought over the blank certificates. Put the package in your desk. After lunch you can take the money up to Grand street and settle the rent with the landlord. The balance of the money goes to Fenton. If we don't do anything with the company we'll sell the plant for what it will bring, which probably won't be \$100."

"What do you think of doing with reference to the company?"

"I intend to visit the shareholders and have a talk with them. If they don't want to help reorganize the company I will make arrangements with them for the payment of the stock certificates at my own expense. If they refuse my offer they are not likely to get anything at all."

"If we reorganize it ourselves, as it struck me that we will be able to do in connection with Fenton, it would have to be a small amount of money, and no money to spare at present to finance anything," said Will.

Of course. My immediate purpose is to merely keep the company on its legs until I can see if there's a future in it. If we do not do this the company by endeavoring to finance it, it couldn't be going on without money, and we are about the only ones likely to take an interest enough in it to make the necessary arrangements when we are able to afford it. If we can make the company even a moderate commercial success we'll make money out of it."

"In the present condition of things we might be able to turn over the whole company for a song," said Will.

"Yes, but I don't intend to dump Fenton. We can't very well get along without him. I dare say he'll act square with us if we let him. He is so far born in the will now that he'll agree to anything."

"My idea was for him to run the business under our supervision."

"That's it exactly. Well, I must get over to the little bank and keep my eye on our deal."

It was after ten now.

Will, who had been sitting at his desk, now looked at the tape and found that D. & O. had gone up to \$67.8.

"We're in the pink to the very last," he said. "Let us hope you'll have a good day. We're off to lunch."

"I'll have a sandwich," said Will, sitting down at his desk.

Several days went by and the market continued to rise. D. & O. advanced to \$70.

The ink man talked a good deal about the plans they had for the future of the Imperial Invisible Ink Co., but made no further move in the matter.

Finally, however, Johnny visited the ink plant and found Fenton busy working up a stock of the ink.

He seemed to be quite cheerful, and his conversation suggested that he began to entertain hopes that the company might have a success after all.

It was clear that he believed Johnny and his partner had a plan, and his actions to stand well with the boy firm.

He declared that he was willing to agree to any arrangement which would enable him to make a profit out of the ink business.

He would be half owner of the plant, with an automobile to drive around.

"I don't think I'd taken all that out of him. A few days later the Co. went into the D. & O. and paid a dividend of \$15 a share, and this all in the ink plant."

Will had got back to the office after lunch he found Fenton there talking to Will.

The ink man looked quite respectable now in a new suit of store clothes, with hat and shoes to match.

He had come down to announce that he had used up all his raw material, as well as his remaining stock of bottles, and therefore could do nothing further in the ink plant line.

"Well," said Johnny, "we are not ready yet to do anything with the company, so I think the best thing you can do for the time being is to get out on the street again and sell the stock. Go up on Fourteenth street and then Fifth, and then take in Twenty-third street. Keep an account of your sales and report to us every day by letter."

"All right," replied Fenton. "I've wanted to try that part of the city, but I didn't have the nerve to go where I'd run against ladies. Now that I don't decently hesitate to talk to them, I'll have a good trade there."

"You've got money enough to pay your expenses for another week, haven't you?"

"Yes," replied Fenton.

"All right. If we want to see you we will send you a letter making an appointment."

Fenton departed and soon afterward Johnny called home to the Curb.

He had noticed a report in the papers to the effect that North Dakota copper was looking up, and he wondered if there was a chance for the firm to make some money.

The copper stock was selling at \$1 a share, and when the Exchange closed he bought 2,000 shares, to be delivered and paid for on the following day at three.

He found that several traders were willing to pay \$1.50 a share for Henrietta stock, although it was not quoted on the Western exchanges yet, not having been relisted.

That gave the boy firm a chance to realize \$1,000 on the 20,000 shares if they chose to sell, but the market situation, for the reports from the mine, continued very favorable.

The discovery of the ore body had been made, but it appeared to be low grade, and the new promoters were prospecting for a better showing.

At any rate the Henrietta mine, or project, as it was called, looked encouraging, and the boy firm felt highly elated to think that they had a block of its stock.

"If some of the other bonanza world only came to life, also, we'd be right in it," said Will.

"That's what we would," replied Johnny. "Our purchase has turned out a lucky speculation as it is. A sort of diamond to one winner. I'll let you of the mine when the auction at the sale would feel sure if they have what about \$10,000 on the deal. The auctioneer told them that there might be a fort in the safe. Of course, I don't believe that himself or he would have got a friend to bid on the safe for him; but his wife might turn out to be all."

"They say many a true word is spoken in jest," said Will. "The day opened and the safe Mr. Watt came in."

"Good afternoon, Mr. Watt," said Johnny, with his usual courtesy.

"I have come to make you an offer of ten cents a share for Henrietta stock," said the visitor, sitting down.

"That's quite a raise from your original offer of a cent," replied Long.

"No matter about that. We all try to live up to our standards as we can get it," said the trader, firmly.

"Get out North Dakota copper?" asked Johnny.

"No, but I can get you some if you want it."

"All right. It's going at a dollar. Are you taking 2,000 shares and knock off your commission, and then have the Henrietta stock?"

"All right," agreed Watt.

"I'll give you a memorandum then, and when you get the copper stock we'll hand over the mining shares."

"I'll be back in the evening," said Watt.

"I hope it's satisfied now," said Johnny.

"I thought we were going to hold on to Henrietta till it amounted to something?" said Will.

"A kid in the plant is worth two in the mine. The only place to sell stock for a profit, I think, is in the present market, we are likely to turn over every dollar of balance, then by laying off the plant and getting rid of it. Suppose North Dakota copper is \$2 a share? We'd double our money right away. There is

more chance of that happening than of Henrietta going to 20 cents."

"But North Dakota might drop to fifty cents, where it was two weeks ago."

"It might; but that is the chance we have to take when we speculate."

Will had nothing further to say, and soon afterward they closed up for the day.

CHAPTER IX.

SETH HARKER, OF SULLIVAN COUNTY.

On the following afternoon the 2,000 shares of North Dakota copper Johnny bought on the Curb were delivered to the firm and paid for, and shortly afterward Watt sent in his 2,000 shares and Will turned over to his boy the 2,000 shares of Henrietta in payment.

The copper stock had gone up to \$1.10 that day, which made their two purchases worth \$4,400.

As the firm had \$600 in cash on hand Johnny and Will were now worth \$5,000.

This was quite a rise in their financial status, for they had commenced business about a month since on a capital of \$1,600.

"We are doing pretty well, don't you think, Johnny?" said Will, when the senior partner came in a little later and looked at the copper shares.

"First rate for beginners. By the way, I heard a man offer ten cents on the Curb for Henrietta."

"If fifty had been offered it wouldn't do us any good now."

"No. I hope you aren't worrying over it."

"Not at all. I'm satisfied that you did the right thing in exchanging it for active copper stock."

"Looks like it when we have made \$400 on it in twenty-four hours."

The door opened and a man with an agricultural look came in.

"How do you do, sir. What can I do for you?" asked Johnny.

"Is Mr. Long in?"

"Yes, sir; that's my name."

"Are yew the broker whose name is on the door?"

"Yes, sir."

"Gosh blame me, but yer're hardly more than a boy."

"I at don't count in Wall Street. It's brains."

"You dew look kind of smart, I'll allow. My name is Harker. I live up in Sullivan County, on a farm I'm not interested in Wall Street, though my old woman it's a dan of roarin' bulls and bears. I've told her that the bulls are them chaps that boom prices, while the bears are the fellows who make their money when things are on the run."

"I've got it straight, Mr. Harker," nodded Johnny. "I have. I make it my business to keep posted. I seen your advt. in a financial paper and I come daown yew abaout some stocks—minin' shares—I bought summer boarder two years ago. He was a slick talker, I'll tell you. His name was Sharkey. He let me have a real favor, and I was feel enough to what he said. I paid him five cents a share for 'em. That was \$50 of my good money he got aout of me. I ain't been able to get it back for my morn."

"If you worthless shares, then?" "I don't he sold me good. Some weeks afterward I ask the broker about 'em, and he writ back that the stock good at all. He said the mine was a dead one. Is a dead mine?"

"I don't know if the mine is dead or not. I was ainted to have a look at it. I went to the building to look at it. I found out you're right, yew are. It's a dead mine. I don't know if it was dead in it. I think you're right."

"What's the name of the mine?" "I don't know."

"I don't know. I don't know the name, ten of 'em, which

calls for 100 shares each," said the farmer, handing Johnny an oblong envelope.

The boy broker took the certificates out and found they were Henrietta.

"I can congratulate you, Mr. Harker. When you bought that stock for a nickel a share you were certainly swindled, for it wasn't worth more than a cent, if that much. The unexpected, however, has happened since. The mine has lately come to life, and it is probable you can sell your shares for double what you paid for them."

"Yew don't mean that, dew yew?" gasped the astonished farmer.

"I do. In fact, we will give you \$100 for that stock ourselves, and take the chances of getting the money back."

"Well, this is a surprise, gosh blame me ef it isn't. What a laugh I'll have on the old woman. So yew'll give me \$100 for it?"

"Yes, sir. We sold 20,000 shares of it yesterday that we got for nothing for ten cents a share, so I guess we are not taking much risk in buying your 1,000."

"Twenty thousand! And yew got 'em for nothin'? Yew must have made a good thing."

"Two thousand dollars clear profit is pretty good."

"So it is. Yew fellows must be rich. Yew've got a fine office here, and to think yew are only boys. Boys must be diff'rent kind of critters in York to what they are in the country. Naow, my son, Cyrus, he's purty smart, but he daon't look nothin' like yew two, even when he's got a b'iled shirt and his store clothes on. Yew two look slicker'n blazes alongside of him. He wanted to come daown to York with me, but his mother wouldn't have it nohow. She wasn't sure it was safe for me to come. She said them bulls and bears might dew things to me," and the farmer haw-hawed.

Johnny and Will joined in the laugh.

"Well, Mr. Harker, do you want to sell that stock for \$100?" asked Johnny.

"Dew I? Yew can't hand aout the long green too quick for me."

"Very well. Will, get the money from the safe."

Johnny wrote out the order for the sale of the stock and asked the farmer to s'gn it.

He did so and also affixed his John Hancock to a receipt for the money.

"I'm right glad I called on yew boys. I'd sooner dew business with smart chaps like yew than most folks. When I shake them bills under the old woman's nose she'll have a fit. She won't say nothin' more to me abaout stocks ag'in. Do yew know I feel real perky after this here sale, just as if I could go aout and paint the taown," and the farmer chuckled.

"You'd better not, Mr. Barker. The chances are you'd find yourself in the station house in the morning dead broke," said Johnny, solemnly.

"Why, don't yew think I kin take care of myself? Ain't I old enough?"

"You are a stranger in the city, and you'd be a mark for the sharpers."

"Yew mean them fellers that come up to yew and say, 'How dew yew dew, Mr. Smith. I'm right glad to see yew in taown. How aire all the folks up in Skowhegan?'" and the farmer chuckled knowingly.

"I see you're on to one of the traps; but that's an old one. There are lots of others. Where are you stopping over night?"

"The Astor House, up on Broadway. A gosh blamed big hotel, ain't it?"

"Oh, that's small alongside the modern ones uptown."

"Is that so? I should like to see one of them new ones. Are they as tall as them skyscrapers daown here?"

"Pretty near, and much wider."

"Well, well; I'll have to see one so I kin tell the old woman and the neighbors. And I want to go to a show—a real theater. I've heard tell there's a real theater in the city, and a good one. I want to go to a show, and I want to see a real theater. I want to see a real theater, and I want to see a real theater."

"I'll take the old woman to see a show, and I'll take Mr. Harker," said Johnny. "I'll take the old woman to see a show, and I'll take Mr. Harker."

"Yew don't say!"

"Neither my partner nor myself would care to escort you around on such a mission. And we would advise you, for your own interest, not to ask anybody else to undertake the job. Your visit to the city so far has been fortunate. You have sold some stock that you thought was worthless for double what you paid for it. You want to take that money back home with you and not run the chance of losing it. I think you'd better let us take you around to the branch post-office, where you can buy two money orders, payable to yourself, for \$50 each. That will only cost you 36 cents. Or you can put your money in one of our envelopes and direct it to yourself, and have the letter registered. That will cost you 12 cents, including the postage. In either case your money will surely arrive at your country post-office and you'll get it there. You might lose it, or it might be stolen from you."

"I'll dew as yew say. It's real kind of yew to suggest it."

"Very well. Will you send it by registered letter?"

"Any way yew say."

Johnny took an envelope and wrote Mr. Seth Harker on it. "What's your post-office address?"

The farmer told him, and he completed the address.

"Put your money in that and seal it up."

The farmer did so.

"Now come with us."

The boys took him to the nearby branch post-office and the letter was duly registered.

"Now your \$100 is safe, Mr. Harker," said Johnny.

"Glad to hear it. Dew yew boys drink?"

"No, sir, we do not."

"P'raps yew smoke?"

"We don't smoke, either."

The farmer looked surprised and a bit disappointed.

"I'd like to stand treat the worst way for yew hev done me a big favor."

"If you want to take a drink we'll go a glass of soda with you," said Johnny.

"Will yew. Come on. Where'll we find a tavern 'raound here?"

"We'll go down on Broad street to the Empire Cafe."

"Caffay! Is that what they call taverns in York?" asked the farmer.

"It's a sort of tony name for a saloon."

The boys piloted Harker into the Empire.

"Gosh! This here is a bang-up place, ain't it?" said Harker.

"What'll you have?" asked the barkeeper.

The farmer scratched his chin whiskers.

"I think I'd like one of them high balls I've heard about. Be it safe for me to take one?" he asked Johnny.

"I guess you can stand one all right," laughed the boy broker.

"Mister, yew kin give me a high ball."

The barkeeper smiled and winked at the boys.

"Two plain sodas for us," said Johnny.

"When I tell my old woman I had a high ball in a caffay she won't know what I'm a-talkin' about," chuckled the farmer. "I'm rayther glad Cyrus didn't come with me. He might want a high ball, too."

The farmer liked the high ball so well that he ordered another, and drank it with great relish.

Then they walked out.

"We'll see you as far as your hotel, as it's right on our way," said Johnny. "Have you been to the Battery?"

"No; where is that? I've heard tell of it."

"We'll take you down there if you want to see it."

"I'd like to, first rate."

So they walked down to the Battery and on the way the boys pointed out all the important buildings.

"That's Bowlin' Green," said Will, pointing to a triangular square at the foot of Broadway.

"Gosh! Yaw don't say? When I was a boy I had a pictur' in one of my school books of Bowlin' Green, and a bunch of men with cocked hats and short breeches pullin' a statue of King George the three times off'n a stand. Is this the place?"

They assured him that it was the identical spot.

He stood and looked at it with open mouth.

They finally got him down on the Battery, showed him around, and then walked up to the Astor House with him.

"Say, yew fellers are all right," he said, shaking them by the hand. "I hope yew'll find time next summer to come aout to my place and stay a week. It sha'n't cost yew a

cent, and I'll show yew arround the country. My old woman and Cyrus will be right glad to see yer."

"We might come, Mr. Harker, but we'll pay our board if we do," said Johnny.

"No yew won't pay a blamed cent," insisted the farmer. "By the way, kin I find my way to a theater to-night?"

"Take the uptown car that passes this hotel. It will carry you right into the theater district. What show are you thinking of going to?"

"I don't know one from t'other; but I'd like to see one of them pieces that has a lot of purty gals in it with short skirts," and the farmer chuckled.

"I guess you want to patronize a musical comedy. Ask the conductor to let you out at Wallack's. There's a good one on there."

"All right. I'll dew it."

"And when you come out of the theater be careful to get on a downtown car. You may get confused, so you'd better ask a policeman to put you on one. Now, good-by. Hope you have a good time and get home all right."

And so the boys parted with Mr. Harker.

CHAPTER X.

LONG & CO.'S COUPS IN COPPER.

Two days passed and then the firm received a letter from Seth Harker.

The old farmer's pothooks were not very intelligible, for he could handle a plow better than a pen, but Johnny who opened the letter, managed to translate the contents after some trouble.

The farmer said he had got home all right and got his registered letter.

He showed "the old woman" the money and had the laugh on her.

She took the surprise better than he had anticipated, congratulated him in his good fortune, and then struck him for half of the money to buy new "fixings" with.

He compromised the matter with \$25, and then gave Cyrus \$5 to blow in on himself.

He said he went to Wallack's Theater and was tickled clear down to his boots.

He declared that "the gals were purtier than peaches, and all-fired slick on their feet."

He ended by inviting the boys once more to visit his farm at any time.

If they'd send him word when they were coming he promised to meet them at the station with his light wagon.

Johnny read the letter to his partner, and Will declared that Farmer Harker was all to the good, a sentiment which the head of the firm shared with him.

That day North Dakota copper went up to \$2.50, which gave the boys a prospective profit of \$6,000 on their 4,000 shares.

Next day a rumor that the Jux Brothers, the copper kings of Wall Street, were at the back of the rise, gave the stock another boost and it touched \$3.

It was said they had acquired the mine and proposed to push it in connection with their other copper properties.

The rumor was not officially denied because neither of the brothers Jux were in the city.

Their representatives had nothing to say on the subject, and so the statement obtained some credence, and a further boom to \$3.50 resulted.

For several days North Dakota copper was the chief stock traded in on the Curb, and the price went up to \$6.25.

The boy brokers were jubilant, and wondered how high it was likely to go.

They were already over \$21,000 ahead, and such luck almost made their heads swim.

Everybody in the Street believed the price of North Dakota would go to \$10 at least.

If it did the boy brokers figured that they would make \$36,000.

At one o'clock that day Johnny dropped into the Empire Cafe for his lunch.

A bang-up meal was served in that saloon to the brokers, who were the chief patrons.

Johnny found the place crowded and had to wedge himself into a small space behind one of the private dining booths.

While eating he overheard snatches of the talk that was taking place in the booth close to him.

A party of big brokers were there, and Johnny learned that Nathan Jux had just returned from Montana and intended to send out that afternoon an official denial of his or his brother's connection with the North Dakota copper mine.

Johnny knew there would be a big drop in the price as soon as the statement reached the Curb.

He gulped down the balance of his lunch and hastened out of the cafe.

Rushing up to a broker he knew inside the roped-off enclosure he gave him the order to sell his 4,000 shares of North Dakota at once.

When the broker offered the stock a rush was made for him, and it was gobbled up in four lots of 1,000 shares in no time.

"Thank goodness we're out of it, and at the top of the market," thought the boy as he sauntered back to his office.

Will was out and Johnny sat down to peruse a mining paper.

Nearly an hour passed and then Will came rushing in, greatly excited.

"What's the matter, Will?" asked the head of the firm, coolly.

"Matter!" cried Will. "North Dakota has gone to smash, and the Curb is in a panic. For heaven's sake go out and sell those shares before we lose all of our profit!"

"What shares, dear boy?" replied Johnny, leaning back in his chair.

"What shares? Why, North Dakota, of course. What are you staring at? Why don't you get a move on?"

"Really, I'm too tired to go out again right away."

"Will gasped.

"Say, are you crazy?" he almost shouted.

"I hope not. I feel about the same as usual."

"Then why don't you make a rush and get rid of the stock. Didn't you hear me say that North Dakota has gone to smash?"

"I should be deaf if I couldn't hear you. Don't shout that way, or you'll make the neighbors think we are engaged in a free fight."

"Say—"

"That'll do. Don't worry about North Dakota. I sold the shares an hour ago at \$6.35. We have made a profit of \$21,000. Now sit down and recover your composure."

"Have you really sold them? Oh, Lord, what a relief! Why in thunder didn't you say so at once and not let me go on like a crazy Indian?"

"You were giving such an excellent performance of a wild man that I hated to spoil the show," grinned Johnny.

"It might have been funny to you, but it wasn't to me," growled Will.

"Forget it, my dear fellow, and shake hands with yourself. We are now worth \$22,500."

"And we haven't been in business two months. What will we be worth when we have been running two years?"

"Don't ask me. We may be dead broke."

"Break! Pooh! Are we a lucky Wall Street firm or aren't we?"

"At present we appear to be lucky--uncommonly so. I said we were worth \$23,500. I forgot to include the Hennetta shares we bought from the farmer. They are worth a hundred, and then there's the \$100 we have out on the ink plant. That makes \$200 more."

"And we mustn't forget the possibility of another of those hundred companies turning up a winner," said Will, amiably.

"Until one of them does they're dead ones, and not worth the paper on which—"

"They're priced! Say, we have funds enough now to do something with the ink proposition."

"Yes, I think we'd better get busy with it. To-morrow I'll visit the six stockholders who are in it to the tune of \$1,000 each."

"How much are you going to offer them for their holdings?"

"May be a cent a share cash."

"What! Five dollars for stock that cost them \$1.50? That's all you get?"

"What do you think the stock is worth, anyway, as the company stands?"

"Nothing."

"Isn't \$20 better than nothing?"

"What's \$20 to them? They're all well off."

"Well, if they don't want to sell I'll get Fenton to call a meeting with a view to raising funds. I'll bet they'll prefer to take \$20 and get out than stay in and put up several times that to push a bankrupt proposition."

"If we buy those men out for \$200, that will be \$400 we're in on the company. Then we'll have to finance it, and that may cost us \$1,000 more. Suppose, after all, we can't get a market for the ink, where will we land?"

"What are you kicking about now? You're the one who proposed to push this matter. Are you getting cold feet?"

"No, I was only thinking."

"You make a lot of noise about it. You don't hear me when I'm thinking. If we buy out those shareholders we'll own 40,000 shares of the capital stock. If we finance the company we'll begin by buying the 14,000 shares in the treasury at say ten cents a share. That will give us the control and put \$1,400 in the treasury. You can present your father with 1,500 shares, and I'll give my uncle the same. Then there will be five shareholders. We'll call a meeting and I must be elected president, you secretary and treasurer, and Fenton, vice-president. Then we'll get busy and see what we can make of the concern," said Johnny.

"That will be first-rate."

"We'll put the name of the company on our door, and that will give it some standing."

"My idea exactly."

"By this programme we stand to lose \$2,000 at least; but unless we venture we might as well throw up the thing now. Fenton has had some success in peddling the stock up-town. That shows it isn't absolutely without some merit. If we can get it on the market it may go, and if it goes the company will make something, and if the company makes a steady profit over its operating expenses we'll get half of it. If we desired to take advantage of our grip and make Fenton give up some of his stock in consideration of putting the company on its feet we could do it, but for my part I don't care to imitate such methods of high finance. I believe giving the poor chap a square deal, even though the risk is on our shoulders. What do you think about it?"

"The same as you. Whatever you say goes with me."

"All right. Let's quit and go home."

That suited Will, so they locked up and left the building.

CHAPTER XI.

THE MAN FROM THE WEST.

On the following morning when Johnny reached his office he wrote down the names and business addresses of the six shareholders of the Imperial Invisible Ink Co., whom he proposed to interview.

They were all brokers, and personal friends of the late Mr. Jackson.

Johnny did not intend to call on the six shareholders until after three in the afternoon, as he knew they would not care to devote their time to what they would doubtless consider an unprofitable matter.

He put the list in his pocket and then took up the daily market report of the preceding day's operations on the Stock Exchange.

Will came in soon afterward and they had a short talk about things in general.

The junior partner then went up to the little bank to widen the black and white station, and Johnny devoted his attention to Wall Street literature.

At a dozen o'clock the door opened and a man walked in. He had a rugged and ready appearance, suggestive of the mining regions of the great West.

He looked at Johnny and then around the room.

"I suppose the boys are out?" he said.

"I am Mr. Long, the head of the firm. What can I do for you?" said Mr. Johnny.

The senior partner looked with a doubtful look.

"They're all in my office?" he asked.

"I'm an active stock broker on the Western exchanges, you know."

"I've got the same idea of a half a dozen brokers. None of them will touch the stock I have because they say the mine is a dead one."

"Take a seat, sir, and tell me the name of the mine, also your name. I like to know who I'm talking to."

The stranger sat down.

"My name is James Dunn. I am from the mining regions of Nevada. I am a prospector, and have spent the best years of my life studying the mining regions in different parts of the country for indications of the presence of gold and silver ore. Three times I struck a fortune, only to have it wrested from me by unscrupulous mining men. Now I believe I am on the trail of a fourth."

"Well?" said Johnny.

"Some months ago I saved a man's life—I pulled him out of a gully where he was lying helpless with a broken leg. He might have lain there for weeks and died from starvation if I didn't come along and see him. He was grateful, and learning I was a prospector he gave me the only thing he had to give and that was a batch of certificates representing 101,000 shares in an abandoned prospect called the Little Giant."

"The Little Giant!" exclaimed Johnny, with sudden interest.

"Yes. The shares represent a one-third interest in the property. The par value of the stock is \$10, but it never sold higher than 10 cents. Three hundred thousand shares were issued and sold by promoters for development purposes. A shaft was sunk with the money, and tunnels run off in different directions, without result, until the funds gave out. The men at the back of it could do no more. They tried to sell another issue of treasury stock, but no promoter would handle it, and so they had to throw up their hands."

"Evidently the mine was worthless."

"Maybe so, but I have my doubts."

"Ah! On what ground?" asked Johnny, eagerly.

"Because all around the property—east, west, north and south—are some of the best producers in that region."

"There's no doubt that there is paying ore in the prospect in question," replied Johnny, shaking his head. "I say this with due respect for your practical knowledge of mining, because you do know how that the course of ore-bearing veins is very erratic. Wherever a strike in the mining district has been made scores of claims have been taken up around it, and I believe the records will show that most of these claims to claims have never panned out in a way to warrant the hopes of their owners."

"I'll allow you are right; but I have an idea it's different with the Little Giant," said the visitor.

"Have you gone over the property yourself since you got hold of the stock?"

"I have."

"Have you made any indication of ore that exceed the claims of others?"

"No."

"Then why do you think there is anything in the Little Giant?"

"From my opinion, none of the tunnels were pulled far enough to reach the vein I believe runs through the ground."

"Well, what was your object in coming to New York? To try to get the stock into a position to push the tunnels farther? If so, I think you would have done better in California or Colorado, or some other mining center, where there are more people and more looking around for possibilities."

"I want to talk to the people," said Mr. Dunn, energetically. "They are the men who robbed me of three fortunes. If I demonstrated that there was ore in the Little Giant, they'd let me out."

"I don't believe you could take your stock away from you without your consent," said Johnny.

"They couldn't; but they wouldn't make a move without I went to the sheriff. They'd get me to sign papers that I'd never break on their face, but which contained a clause that would place me at their mercy. They'd send hordes of men have been worked upon me. I had to fight a fight of my hands, and I was left in the lurch."

"Do you appeal to the law of the State?"

"I did. But I was beaten, because the men had money, and when I went out in the trial court they carried the case to the top of the court, and I had no money to continue the fight, and so I was beaten out."

"It was too bad."

"It was outrageous! But without money a man has no chance in the world."

"What did you expect to do in New York? There is no market here, or down back. You couldn't pay a day's board in a hotel with your 101,000 shares of Little Giant."

"I came to New York to see a man named Howard Jackson, a Wall Street broker."

"I'm afraid you won't see him. He died about three months ago. This was his office, and I worked for him before starting out for myself."

The caller did not seem to be surprised.

"I was told he was dead by the next broker I called on. When I called on Broker Wait, on this floor, and tried to tell him, he said he was too busy to waste any time on old acquaintances. He told me to call on you. He had never had a batch of Little Giant shares which you bought from the Jackson estate. Was he right?"

"Yes."

"Mr. Jackson, according to the company's books, held at one time 100,000 shares, or a third interest in the mine. Have you got the whole block, or only a part of it?"

"We have the whole block," replied Johnny.

A look of satisfaction came over the Westerner's face.

"I am glad to hear it, for between us we control the mine, and maybe you'll be willing to help me push its development further on the chance that it might pan out a winner."

"Long & Co. is open to the consideration of any proposition that looks promising. What facts and figures have you to back up your application for capital to further develop the Little Giant?"

"I will show you, but I must admit I have no convincing evidence to prove that a vein of paying ore runs through the property," said Dunn.

"Never mind that. I like your honesty at any rate. Most men in your position would swear they had positive knowledge of a pay streak, even if they were unable to prove the fact in the slightest way. Go ahead and let me have the truth about the Little Giant. Did you bring a map of the district, which shows the position of the prospect to the mines about?"

"Yes," replied Dunn, taking a bulky envelope from his pocket.

"And a diagram of the property, showing the location of the shaft and the run of the tunnels?"

"Yes."

"Any buildings and machinery?"

"There's a rough oblong shanty near the mouth of the shaft, which contains a small donkey-engine used for hoisting the dirt out of the mine. The shanty is in position over the shaft, and the royal buckets, picks, shovels, barrows and other tools, including half a dozen hand drills, are stored in the shanty. There is also a little wooden building, half belonging to the shanty, with a small quantity of lumber bought to shore up the roof and sides of the tunnel. That's nothing else of importance."

The prospector spread out the map of the district first.

The position of the Little Giant was marked in red ink on it.

"I'll around the property, though at a little distance, to see if it is not well known in the mining world. Most of it is being operated by local operators."

"I'll give you a booklet in which are listed the names of the miners, and the names of their partners."

He also exhibited a certified copy of the deed as recorded in the county recorder, and other documents connected with the prospect.

Then he showed the drawings of the property itself, with the positions of the shaft and the tunnels carefully outlined, with their depth, length and other measurements, marked down.

Bunn then described the general character of the country around about, showing where it was particularly hilly, and where comparatively level.

In fact, after a two hours' interview, Johnny had as good an idea of the Little Giant mine and its surroundings as it was possible for one to get at second hand.

"Where are you stopping, Mr. Dunn?" he asked.

"At the Astor House."

"All right. I'll have a talk with my partner this afternoon about this matter, and we will consider what steps, if any, we care to take with a view to the further development of the property. Drop in tomorrow afternoon after three and I will introduce you to Mr. Waters, and if there are any

other points we would like to know you can make them plain to us."

The prospector nodded, and took his leave, leaving him well satisfied with the arrangement he had made, leaving all the documents with Johnny so that he could fully explain everything to his business associate.

CHAPTER XII.

BUYING IN THE IMPERIAL INVISIBLE INK CO.'S STOCK.

When Will got back, after taking his lunch, John informed him with the particulars of the visit of James Bunn, the prospector.

"Gladly!" exclaimed the junior partner. "Do you think there's anything in the Little Giant mine?"

"I couldn't tell you. Bunn doesn't really know him, but he firmly believes there is."

"Lord! This is the third of our leads. It's rather fatiguing. Say, I have an idea there may be a future in the mine."

"What makes you think so?"

"Because we seem to be a lucky firm."

"We are certainly lucky to make over \$20,000 in two months, but that's still not enough to look like a company."

"Oh, I don't know. I feel it in my bones that we will be millionaires yet."

"I hope so, but millionaires don't spring up in a night, as a rule. Here, let me explain these diagrams and other documents to you, and then you'll understand more about the Little Giant."

Johnny took out his pencil and began to draw a diagram on all the facts.

"Now I'm going to lunch. I'll leave you to pore over the papers, and make yourself more familiar with the matter. I told Bunn to call to-morrow after three, so you could meet him, and hear what more he has to say on the subject."

Then the senior partner put on his hat and went out.

He didn't come back till three, and he was still not enough to tell Will that he was going to visit one of the six stockholders of the Imperial Invisible Ink Co. He went direct to the office of George Fuller, a Club broker, sent in his name, and was admitted.

Fuller knew Johnny as the late Mr. Jackson's senior and junior clerk, and he had met the boy before in the brokerage business in his late employer's office.

He took the information as a joke, and thought nothing more about it.

"Hello, Johnny," he said, offering his hand. "Sit down. Haven't seen you since Mr. Jackson died. What are you doing?"

"There's my card, Mr. Fuller," said the boy, handing him one.

"Long & Co., stocks and bonds," read the trader, with a smile. "So you are in business for yourself? I heard you had started out in business for yourself, but I didn't tell any stock in it. Doing anything?"

"Don't I look just like you?"

"You, but that's no evidence of being successful."

"That's right. And I'll tell you what I did to himself out of good clothes, a watch and chain, and other trifles. Some of the Wall Street chaps put on a smile, but then their faces turned pale. But, in order to humor them, I will tell you. Long & Co. is doing extremely well for a new firm. We have more money in two months than most firms have in two years."

"You don't say. Glad to hear you so fortunate. How are you making it?"

"Taking a few shares and then cashing out. For instance, we bought 4,000 shares of Northern Steel, and the other day just sold them, and still cashed out. That's all I can say, but that's all I do."

"I should say," said the broker, opening his eyes. "You were meant to cash out at the top of the market."

"The market is slow about Long & Co. Well, let's get down to business. What's the latest?"

"The market is slow about Long & Co."

"I'll give you \$100 for a thousand shares of Long & Co."

"I say I don't want that fare. That was the one thing

that made me come on Jack's side. He got me into it for a fortune of 5,000 shares, for which I paid \$1,250. The promoter was a man named Fenton, who was a scoundrel, for two, in fact. We called him a scoundrel, and I called him a scoundrel. If you don't believe me, just look at the name of his brother, and you'll see he was a rascal, and ran away with all the funds of the company."

"You mean the brother-in-law."

"Of course. That put the kibosh on the corporation, and I've heard no more about it."

"The plant, a small one, is situated in a top loft on Grand street," said Johnny. "Fenton has been trying to support it, but it's a failure, and I don't know what I can do on the plant."

"What do you mean by that?"

"The firm did."

"You?"

"Well, you see we've got hold of Mr. Jackson's 10,000 shares in the company, and I suppose it's all right, but it'll be a long time before it's a financial success."

"What did you pay for the shares?"

"Practically nothing. I bought his safe with a lot of worthless papers in it, and I got the shares for nothing, and the safe for the junk."

"Well, I suppose I think you're a scoundrel to the company, but I suppose you're a scoundrel to the safe."

"I wanted to find out if you were willing to help put the company on its feet again."

"Well, I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll help you put the company on its feet again, but I'll do it with a transfer of my shares to you."

"What do you mean by that?"

"What can I do with a bunch of waste paper? I threw it into that closet six months ago. I suppose it's there yet."

"What do you want for it?"

"Do you want to buy it?"

"I'll take it on a chance if you let it go cheap enough."

"Make a bid."

"I'll give you \$25."

"I'll take the transfer and kick it out."

"There's the money. Now we'll get a transfer to Long & Co."

"Well, Johnny, if this is the way you and your partner are going to do business, I suppose it's all right."

"Thank you very much, Mr. Fuller. We'll be in touch with you when some other people are eating."

"Are you referring to me, you young rascal," laughed the trader.

"Certainly not. Present company always excepted."

"There's your transfer. May it do you some good—twenty-five dollars' worth, at any rate. Now go and fish for a transfer to Long & Co."

"By not doing so you are \$25 ahead."

"I'll take the transfer and kick it out."

"I'll take the transfer and kick it out."

Having finished his transfer, Johnny took a walk in the afternoon and left the office.

He next called on Dr. Stevenson, who was in the middle of a conversation, so Johnny stated why he had called.

Stevenson had no desire to continue his connection with the boy, and so he said, "I'll take the transfer and kick it out."

"Want to sell your stock?"

"Yes, I do."

"I'll take it at \$100."

"You can have it for \$100."

"Too high. I'll give you \$25."

Johnny said something more emphatic than polite and replied, "No!"

"All right. Come on."

He would have liked to have had a good fight, but he had given up fighting, so he just took the transfer and kicked it out.

He went to W.H. the next day, and got the transfer to Long & Co. and cashed it out.

At 4 P.M. he had paid for the boy, and for the day.

At ten next morning Will started for the little bank, leaving Johnny at his desk.

Fifteen minutes later there came a gentle knock on the door.

"Come in," said Johnny, and in came a remarkable pretty and modest-looking girl.

"Do you employ a stenographer?" asked the fair visitor.

"Looking for a job?" asked the boy broker.

"Yes. I am a good bookkeeper, too," she said.

"Sit down, Miss—"

"My name is Miss Grant."

"Where were you last employed?" asked Johnny.

The young lady explained that she had been working for an insurance broker who had gone out of business.

"Well, Miss Grant, we—I am Mr. Long of this firm—have nothing to offer you, but if you will leave me your address I will write you if I hear of something in your line."

"Thank you, Mr. Long. That is very kind of you," said the girl.

"Don't mention it. By the way, why wouldn't it be a good idea for you to act as an independent stenographer and typist. There are several persons on this floor who haven't enough work to employ a girl right along and are obliged to hire one by the hour from the outside. Now, suppose you were to take desk-room with us—we wouldn't charge you anything, for you could take charge of the office for us when we were both out—and go around among the people in the building who have no regular stenographer and agree, for a certain price, to do whatever work they wanted? Would you like that?"

"I think I would, but unfortunately I cannot afford to buy a typewriter," replied Miss Grant.

"You can rent one for \$3 a month. I'll agree to rent it for a month for you to give you a start, and you can use that table yonder. If things don't pan out to suit you I'll look up a job for you in some broker's office. Or it is possible we may find use for your services ourselves, as we are interested in putting a certain enterprise on its feet. It may be in running order within a month, and it is quite possible we shall need somebody to look after the books and the general details of the business," said Johnny.

So matters were arranged between the boy broker and the young lady for her to come to the office on the following day, when he promised to have a machine ready for her, and some business cards for her to circulate around the building.

When Will came in later on Johnny told him about Miss Grant and the arrangement he had made with her.

Will had no objection to offer, and thought it was a good idea to have the young lady on hand, for it was not unlikely they would need her services themselves in the near future.

At a quarter past three the prospector appeared and Johnny introduced him to his partner.

The three then had a long and serious talk about the Little Giant mine, the result of which was that Bunn was to return to the mining district and make some further borings in the mine on the crest, and the boys agreed to pay all the expenses of the experiment.

"We'll give the thing a fair trial, Mr. Bunn, and if nothing develops the loss will be ours," said Johnny. "If, on the contrary, you make a strike, you will advise us and I will try to arrange matters so I can take a trip out there. Then if the things look bright, we'll consider what is the best thing to be done towards developing the property in a systematic way."

This arrangement was satisfactory to the prospector, and the next day he departed for the West.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE INK COMPANY IS REORGANIZED.

Miss Grant, whose first name was Tricy, made her appearance next day, and Johnny made her acquainted with his partner.

"I have called on several of the men on this floor who have to get their work done by outsiders from a public stenographer's office, and they have all agreed to give you a trial. Here are their names and the number of their rooms. You had better call on them and make your arrangements for doing their work."

The young lady thanked Johnny for the interest he showed in her, and then went out to call on the gentlemen the boy broker had spoken to.

She was back in half an hour with a bunch of work, and soon she was rattling the keys of her instrument in a merry way.

Johnny and Will both went out and left her in charge of the office.

Both partners went to the little bank and sat down with the crowd before the blackboard.

"I see L. & M. is advancing," said Johnny. "I think we might make a few dollars on it. What do you think?"

"I think so, too."

The senior partner had brought \$10,000 in his clothes to have it on hand in case anything turned up, so he went to the margin clerk's window and bought a thousand shares of L. & M. at 90.

In the course of an hour it went up to 92.

It finally got up to 93 3-8.

Johnny wouldn't hold on any longer, and gave in the order for the sale.

Then they went to lunch, conscious that they had made \$3,000 that morning.

When they got back to the office L. & M. was quoted on the tape at 91 5-8.

"We were lucky to get out in time. If I had held on too long we wouldn't have made more than half as much," said Johnny.

Miss Grant stopped work, put on her hat and went out to lunch.

While she was out the boys had some more talk on the subject of the Invisible Ink Co., which they were now prepared to push as soon as Johnny had called on the other four stockholders.

"You go up and see Fenton this afternoon, Will. He's making another supply of the ink. Tell him that matters are coming to a focus and that we expect to start in making the ink for the trade in a few days. Tell him to come down and see us Saturday noon," said Johnny.

"All right. I might as well go up now, as I have nothing else on hand."

Johnny called on the four stockholders that afternoon, and bought their shares for \$59 each.

That left Stevenson the only one of the six in the company.

Long & Co. now owned 35,000 shares of the stock.

John decided to call on Stevenson again and give him what he asked. He didn't care to have the broker reap any benefit that might accrue at the expense of the other traders. He called on him next morning, which happened to be Saturday. This second visit excited Stevenson's suspicions that there was something in the wind concerning the company, and he raised his price to \$500.

"I guess you'll have to keep the stock, sir," said Johnny. "At the present moment it isn't worth the paper it's written on."

"If it isn't why are you willing to give \$100 for it?" asked the trader.

"Because my firm is trying to reorganize the company and finance it. Now you have refused to put up any more money, consequently I judge you have no interest in its reorganization. If you have no interest in it it's your place to get out. I have bought out all the other gentlemen at something less than \$50 apiece. I have concluded to come up to your original offer in order to make a clean sweep. If the company doesn't go, why my firm will be the loser, so you see it would be ridiculous to expect us to pay you a fancy price for stock that has no actual value."

"That stock cost me \$1,250," said Stevenson.

"I know it did. The other gentlemen paid the same as you, and yet they are glad to get out of the company and give us the chance to see what we can make out of it. If you are going to stay in you will be notified to attend a meeting to be held for reorganization purposes next week. Then it will be decided by vote how the company is to be financed."

"I thought you said you were going to finance it?"

"If we secure your shares my firm will finance the company, otherwise we won't, unless you put up your proportion."

"I won't put another cent in it," said Stevenson, forcibly.

"And you won't sell your stock for \$100?"

"Suppose I won't, what then?"

"In that case my firm will foreclose its lien on the plant

and patent and buy it in. The company will then have no visible assets. We will lose the \$225 we have paid for the stock, and you will be out \$100," said Johnny, in a tone that showed he was in earnest.

"What do I care for \$100!" said the broker.

"Not much, I guess. So much the more reason why you should get out of the company and give Fenton and ourselves the chance to see what we can do with it."

"What do you think you can do with it?"

"We think that in time we may be able to build a business up."

"In time, eh?" said the broker, thumbing on his desk. "Give me the \$100 and you can take the stock."

The deal was made and Johnny went away satisfied. About noon Fenton turned up at the office, and Johnny outlined his plans to him.

"You have no objection to our firm taking the control of the company, Fenton? You will still have 45,000 shares."

"Whatever you propose goes with me," replied the man.

"All right. You are still the president, and in that capacity I wish you to sign this typewritten notice for a meeting of the present stockholders, to take place at this office on Monday at five o'clock, p. m."

"All right," said Fenton, and he signed it.

"We will reorganize with five stockholders. You, my partner, and I, my uncle and Mr. Waters, senior. This room will be the company's executive office hereafter, and its name will appear on the door. The factory will remain where it is for the present, under your charge. Anything to suggest?"

Then ink man shook his head.

"That will be all then. Be on hand Monday afternoon at five."

On Monday afternoon the Imperial Invisible Ink Co. was duly reorganized. Johnny was elected president; Fenton, vice-president, and Will Waters, secretary and treasurer. Long & Co. bought the 14,000 unsold shares at ten cents a share, and deducted the \$100 the firm had previously advanced, so as to remove the lien from the plant. The company then resumed business on a capital of \$1,300. Fenton reported a supply of ink on hand, and Johnny instructed him to visit the wholesale stationery houses and make the best arrangements he could for putting the ink on the market. Will was directed to insert advertisements in the trade journals identified with the stationery business, and to order whatever printing was necessary. Other matters were attended to and the meeting adjourned. Next day the name of the Imperial Invisible Ink Co. was painted on the door. Thus the reorganized corporation was started on its new career.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE LITTLE GIANT PROVES A WINNER.

A few days later Johnny was told by a political friend in the Bronx to buy Telephone stock, as the Board of Aldermen were going to grant the corporation certain new privileges that were bound to send the stock up several points. Johnny took the pointer and the next day visited the little bank and gave in an order for 2,000 shares. At the next meeting of the aldermen the telephone question, which had been hanging fire for weeks, was settled in the company's favor and telephone stock at once jumped up ten points. Johnny sold out when he saw that it was not likely to go much higher, and the lucky firm of boy brokers added \$20,000 more to their capital. Miss Grant was doing pretty well at her new line of business, and her presence in the office was a considerable help to the boys. They had a small amount of typewriting to be done every day themselves, and this was pretty certain to be done as time went on. Johnny got a letter from the prospector containing a full report of what he had accomplished in a week's time, and for he had struck no important ledge of the lead. He had found a good bit of lead ore, which, of course, was not sufficient for them to build any lead mill. He said he had just shipped a box full of it to him by express, and they might expect to receive it in a few days. They could send a part of it to the assay office on Wall Street and get a report upon it. Three days later the box arrived, and was delivered at the

rock, so they were unable to pass an opinion on it. office. Johnny opened it, and he and Will looked at the top specimens. They were no judges of ore from the looks of the

"We'll send half of it around to the assay office," said Johnny, letting the cover drop. "Go down and see if the janitor has a suitable kind of box to put it in."

Will went to the basement, got a box about the size he wanted, and brought it upstairs. He and Johnny filled it with ore from the big box. While they were doing it they noticed a black powdery substance in the large box and Will asked what it was.

"I'll never tell you," replied Johnny. "I suppose it's some of the dirt from the mine."

He shut the cover down and pushed the small box aside, to be later carried to the assay office up the street. Just then Broker Howard came in to see them. Johnny showed him some of the ore specimens, and told him they came from a mine out West the firm was interested in.

"Gone into the mining business, too, eh?" laughed Howard. "You boys are getting to be promoters as well as brokers."

"We are ready to take up with anything there is money in," replied Will.

"What is this ink company, the name of which you have on your door?"

Johnny started to tell him that it was a corporation the firm held a controlling interest in, when the broker suddenly stopped him.

"There's a strange odor in this room," he said, sniffing the air. "Smells as if something of a disagreeable nature was burning."

"I've noticed it for the last minute or two," said Will.

"That's so," admitted Johnny. "There is a strange smell about the office. I wonder where it comes from?"

"It seems to come from that box," spoke up Trixy, pointing at the big one that had come from the West.

Johnny looked at the box a moment, and then threw up the cover. A cloud of stifling smoke arose, like a balloon, out of it.

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Johnny. "What is this?"

The others in the room started back aghast. Trixy jumped from her chair and ran for the door, while Mr. Howard ducked like a person who thought something was going to fly at him. The bunch of smoke rose to the ceiling and spread itself out there. No more of it came out of the box, nor could Johnny see any evidence of fire in it. The box appeared to be just as it was before the strange vapor generated in it.

"That beats the Dutch!" said Johnny, looking down in a puzzled way.

Will and Broker Howard ventured to draw near, while Trixy recovered from her momentary alarm and returned to her work. The smell hung in and around the box, but the boys noticed that the powdery substance they had seen in among the ore had disappeared. After canvassing the matter it was finally decided that the powdery stuff had been some chemical substance that existed in the mine, and that it was subject to spontaneous combustion under certain unexplained circumstances. The door and window were thrown open to air the office, and soon the peculiar incident was forgotten. Shortly after Howard took his departure a telegram from the prospector was delivered at the office. It was very brief and read as follows:

"Eureka. Letter on way. James Bunn."

"That must mean he has found the ledge of ore," said Johnny.

"If he has, we are lucky for fair," replied Will. "Shake on it."

And they shook hands in anticipation of their prospective luck. While they were talking, Fenton came in to make his daily report. He had got the more important wholesale stations to take the ink after he had demonstrated its particular virtues, and as he had cleaned out all his stock in hand he wanted to buy a supply of the raw material, bottles, etc., so that he could continue the manufacture of the ink. Will provided him with the necessary cash, and then he said he would have to hire a boy to help him at the plant.

"Hire one, then," said Johnny. "You need not ask our permission to do that. You're in charge of the factory. It's up to you to turn out the amount of ink the orders call for, and you must see that you have enough on hand to fill them as they come in. Send a duplicate of all bills here, and we

will do the best for you. We have a young lady here who needs work, and I would be pleased to employ."

Fenton said he'd keep things straight and then went away. Two days later the letter from Bunn arrived. This conveyed the news of the strike, with all the details.

"Our fortune is made," he said. "Come out at once and let me show you the lode. How high the ore will assay I can't say, but from my experience in the mines I should say that we have as good ore as any of the big producers around us. As you boys are equal partners with me I deem it best not to make a move till you come out here and we have talked over plans. Let your partner buy up any Little Giant stock he can find. He ought to get it for a song. The company will go so that we can gather in whatever is to be found out here. The company will have to be reorganized, of course, as the old officers are all out of it. There are no debts to be paid out to be divided with. The 100,000 shares which are out are all held by small holders, and we will have to get it out in a quiet way. As soon as we have secured the bulk of it we will give out the news, and then there will be a rush to buy stock."

There was much more in the letter, but there is no need to repeat it all. Johnny and Will were jubilant. Fortune was on their side, and in their hearts a great fire. Long & Co. was to be a success, and by Will's own firm.

"You'll go on, of course," said Will.

"Sure I will. I still have a plan, that is, to make more money. I will take a share of the Crib brokers' offices, and so I've got a piece of the Little Giant shares."

The boy brokers devoted a good part of the day to hunting for the stock and they bought 1,000 shares at something less than a cent a share. In the evening, at 6 o'clock, Johnny boarded a fast express for the West, and in due time reached the wonder city of Goldfield. Johnny had long been interested in this tour, which had sprung up like magic in the last days of a dead volcano, whose bones are broken and mingled with the desert sands. He was not surprised to find it looking like a modern, up-to-date little city. He had seen pictures of its buildings, and had read about its water system, its steam power, its gas, its great city of schools, its library, and its electric light and power system. It was different from the old-time mining camps of rude tents and one-story shanties along a single street! But the Little Giant mine was some distance from Goldfield. It was situated in Paradise, miles out on the desert. It was easy to get there nowadays by means of high-power automobile stages from Goldfield, and after a brief stay at this town Johnny took his way for his destination. Telegraph and telephone wires connected Paradise with Goldfield and so the boy broker was able to inform Prospector Bunn of his coming. The mining man was on hand to meet him and give a royal welcome. Johnny registered at the best hotel and after dining with Bunn they drove out to the mine in the rig that belonged to the company. The afternoon was spent on the property, and for the first time in his life the New York boy found himself in the tunnel of a real mine, and had the pleasure of seeing a rich lode of gold ore.

"If that vein runs the entire length of the claims which make up this property the mine is worth a million as it stands," says Bunn.

It was arranged that the company should be reorganized as soon as they had acquired all the outstanding shares in sight.

Back in Paradise and Goldfield received orders to buy in the stock, and at the end of a week 10,000 shares had been secured at a cent a share. Several small holders in Paradise were induced to help put the reorganization through, being informed in confidence that the Little Giant had developed large quantities of gold. Johnny was elected president; Bunn, vice-president and general manager, and Will Waterman, treasurer. The main office was to be located in New York City. When everything was ready the news of the discovery of the golden lode was given out, and created great excitement in the district. Application was made at the Goldfield Exchange to have the stock re-listed, and this was acceded to. So Johnny started back East. There was a big crowd at the stock, and an issue of 50,000 shares was sold the first day at 25 cents later on. This money was used for purchasing necessary machinery and paying for the first year's expenses. Fifty thousand more shares were offered and sold at 15 cents, which made 115,000 shares held by outsiders. Johnny and his partner,

held 150,000 and Bunn 100,000 shares between them, which, of course, gave the three the complete control of the mine.

CHAPTER XV.

CONCLUSION.

Johnny returned to New York as fast as a swift train could get him there. When he turned up at the office he found that Will had had the name of the Little Giant Mining and Milling Co. painted on the door.

The boy brokers now came into some prominence in Wall street. It was soon known that they were largely interested in the Little Giant, for the Crib traders saw that Johnny was president of the company, and Will was the secretary-treasurer. Every one wondered how they had got hold of the mine. Broker Matt cleared the mystery up by circulating the news concerning how they had acquired 100,000 shares owned by the deceased Mr. Jackson.

Summer had come around, and one day Johnny suggested to Will that they visit Farmer Seth Harker over Sutter Hill. Will agreed and the farmer was informed by letter that they were coming out to his place on the following Saturday afternoon. When they alighted from the train at Sutter Hill, a country town, the farmer was on hand in his buggy to meet them. He gave them a rousing welcome.

When Johnny and Will reached the farm they found several city boarders there. These people looked at them with curiosity and respect, for the farmer and his wife had won the boys a big reputation and ascertained that they were worth a vast of money. Naturally, the boy brokers found themselves the "lions" of the occasion. Mrs. Seth Harker declared she was proud to entertain them, and she had the best of all overtake any shortcomings about the farm. Guests and all the a la French when he was presented to them, and didn't know what to say. He had on his Sunday-go-to-meeting clothes, and he acted as if they felt strange to him. The boys had a hang-up time during their brief visit, and left for the city on the early Monday morning train. Business was dull during the hot months in Wall Street, but the winter did not materially interfere with the firm's business enterprise. The receipts of the ink company were largely put into advertising. Nobody drew any money out of the concern but H. B. Bunn, who needed it to live on. It was marked up against him, to be eventually deducted from his dividends. Work went on at the Little Giant mine in great shape, but no ore was shipped until the fall. Before that Will paid a visit to Paradise and saw the mine in busy operation. Bins of ore were stacked up in tiers, like a military fortification, when he got there, and Bunn explained that this would all be shipped to the smelter later. He returned to New York, well pleased with his trip to southwestern Nevada.

Trixie Giant was now bookkeeper as well as stenographer for the firm. She counted it a lucky day that she dropped in at the office looking for a position. Not only was she well receiving good wages, but she and Johnny were keeping company, and there was no doubt that some day in the future she would become the mistress of a fine house, as the wife of the senior partner of the firm. Will was calling regularly on Kittie Long, and the chances were the two would also make a match of it. Both of the boy brokers were in matrimonial catches, and the girls considered themselves lucky in catching on. The Imperial Invisible Ink Co. did an increasing business all winter and spring, and at the regular annual meeting of the reorganized company a dividend of two per cent. was declared on the capital stock. As Long & Co. held 5,000 shares, their shares amounted to \$1,040. That left them still \$600 behind in cash, but as they valued their interest at about \$15,000, they were actually away ahead of the game. Fenton received \$100, less \$100 already paid to him, while Johnny's uncle and Will's father got \$20 each, which was clear gain, as their stock hadn't cost them a cent. When summer came again the Little Giant was paying regular quarterly dividends of 2 1-2 per cent., or at the rate of 10 per cent, a year on its capital stock, and the boy brokers, as well as the prospector, were making a good thing out of it.

Next week's issue will contain "IN THE DIAMOND FIELDS; OR, THE BOY WHO MADE A GREAT FIND."

FROM ALL POINTS

HOTEL FLOATS TO WHERE FISH BITE.

Unable to purchase a permanent site on shore, a Canadian operates a floating hotel on Great Central Lake, B. C., a body of water noted as a fishing and hunting resort, and wins the approbation of patrons by moving the quarters to any spot that affords the best sport, says Popular Mechanics. There are ten guest rooms on board the big house boat, each capable of accommodating two persons, a large dining room and a kitchen.

Around the structure is a wide veranda, from which perch can be taken with a hook and line if the craft is advantageously moored. Trout are plentiful, but require a little more effort to capture. Wild game abounds in the woods which surround the lake.

During the winter, when ice covers the water, the proprietor of the hotel becomes a fur trapper.

AIRPLANE CATCHES GEESE.

There may be nothing new under the sun, but there are new ways of doing things. The following amply bears out this statement:

John Pruess, who lives up in the Devil's Nest country along the old Mizzou, was in Bloomfield, Nebraska, recently and brought with him the news that hunting geese via the airplane method is the latest thing up in that region. The aviators who have been pulling off this stunt hail from across the line in South Dakota.

They come swooping along in their machine, fire a volley at any stray flock of geese that may be breasting the waters of the Big Muddy, and as the geese rise into the air and start to make their getaway, the airplane swoops down upon them and they are caught in a line net, which is a part of the machine's equipment. Whole flocks are pursued until the last lone member of the flock falls a victim to birdmen.

THE COMMUNIST "TEN COMMANDMENTS."

1. Follow the way of the proletarist, which has always been the road of creativity, from oppression by count, landlord, money-lenders and gentry.

2. Have no friends; and do not make yourself a friend. Fight the Czar of Hungary always, that it may be as strong and perfect as possible.

3. Honor the Republic of Soviets and follow its commandments. The Republic of Soviets is working for you, and you must fight for the Republic.

4. Do not lose courage. On the day when you lose courage your former oppressors will regain their strength.

5. Do not disturb order. If you step out of the ranks you are a mere drop of water; your enemy

can destroy you with two fingers of his hand. If you remain with your comrade you are a victorious sea that swallows up the old world and brings on the new one.

6. Maintain discipline.

7. Do not forget that you are surrounded by enemies within and without. March with strong feet, grip your weapons with strong hands, and the sword shall fall from the hands of your adversaries and national frontiers be swept away.

8. Do not allow in your ranks any one who incites you to riot, for he is speaking the speech of the enemy.

9. Do not allow in your ranks any disturber of order or provocateur.

10. Do not take away the rich man's house, his ox, his land or his jewels; let this be the business of the council. Only thus can everything be yours and your brethren's—the inheritance of the working man and the agricultural poor.

NO CHANGE IN CLIMATE.

"Weather and climate have not changed from the time of the Pilgrims down to the present day," are the closing words of an article by Prof. Robert de C. Ward of Harvard University on "The Snowfall of the United States," in *Scientific Monthly*.

That this is so is proved by a comparison of present day conditions with those so accurately recorded by the early settlers of New England. "There are accounts of great cold; of deep snows; of violent winter storms. There are also many descriptions of every mild and open winters. Thus, we read of December and January resembling May and June; of flowers growing in the woods in mid-winter; of so little snowfall as scarcely to give opportunity for enjoying the music of the sleigh bells; of 'green Christmases'; of 'winter turned into summer'; of the ground bare for the most part; of little ice; of crocuses up, of wild violets in bloom, and of lilacs 'throwing out their leaves' in January."

It is interesting to note that Prof. Ward awards the prize for the heaviest recorded average snowfall to Tamarack, Cal., with Summit, Cal., as a close second. The average fall at the former, which is at an altitude of 8,000 feet, is 521.3 inches, and at the latter (7,027 feet), it is 419.6 inches. In the winter of 1910-11 757 inches fell at Tamarack, and in 1879-80, 783 inches fell at Summit.

But in Mount Rainier, Wash., at Paradise Inn, at an elevation of 5,500 feet from Nov. 24, 1916, to June, 1917, 789.5 inches fell, though that season was not one of unusually heavy snowfall. This was the first record obtained from that part of the Cascade Mountains, so it may be that Mount Rainier will take from the Sierra Nevada its distinction.

Dan, the Delivery Boy

—OR—

The Mysterious House on the Hill

By GASTON GARNE

(A Serial Story)

CHAPTER VII (Continued).

"It looks all straight, miss. That's sure their letter-head. All the same I don't understand."

"There are lots of things we don't understand in this life, Dan," laughed Mrs. Billup. "You want to learn to take life as it comes."

"Yes," said Dan, "but where am I going? That's what's bothering me."

"To the White Mountains for a week's vacation," replied Mrs. Billup, "and I want you to understand that if you behave yourself as well as you did before you will have the time of your life."

"But do I hold my job? That's what's bothering me!" cried Dan.

"Of course you hold your job. Isn't the letter enough?" snapped Mrs. Billup.

"Don't be cross with Dan, ma," said Jean. "Of course, it must all seem very strange to him. Now, suppose we go to breakfast. I'm sure it must be ready by this time."

CHAPTER VIII.

TOM BUTTS IN.

On Sunday morning Tom Kane again rose early, with his mind made up to solve the mystery of Dan's disappearance if he could.

Then there was also the mystery of that iron door through which he felt certain Dan must have vanished.

In short, the whole business had so got upon Tom's nerves that he could think of little else.

In other words, Tom's curiosity was fully aroused, and the boy was as persistent as he was curious.

So it was back to the house at the head of the hollow again for Tom, and this time he resolved that he would know something definite about it before he quit.

But the house with its closed blinds presented the same sphinx-like appearance as before.

Tom I can by ringing the bell.

His intention was to inquire for Dan if anyone came to the door.

None came, after repeated ringing.

Tom now went around to the rear and looking down into the hollow, soon "piped" the iron door.

It was built into the bank on the opposite side.

Seemingly, it was the door of some old family burial vault, built in colonial times, when the rich families of upper New York buried their dead on their own grounds.

On top of the bank, facing the other street, stood an old frame mansion.

"Mebbe that house is mixed up into de business," thought Tom. "I'll sneak around the block and find out who lives there just for luck."

He did so, and coming up in front of the old mansion found it as much of a sphinx as the house on the other side of the hollow.

The windows were all concealed behind closed blinds, and the grounds wore a neglected look.

Tom did not venture into the yard, but hung around watching the passersby, waiting to see somebody come along of whom he could inquire about the house.

At last he picked out a boy of about his own age who looked as if he might live in the neighborhood, for he carried a fishing pole in his hand and was evidently bound for the river.

"Who lives in dat house?" repeated the boy, as Tom put the question. "Why, Mr. Stevenson lives there when he's home, which ain't very often. Most of the time it is closed up like you see it now."

"Who's Mr. Stevenson and what does he do?" asked Tom.

"I don't know what he does," was the reply. "They say he's a professor or something."

"You live around here?"

"Sure."

"Where do you work?"

"Tiedemeyer's grocery over on the avenue."

"Does that feller trade wit' you?"

"Sure. But, say, what's de matter with you? What are you axing me all these questions for?"

"Oh, I want to see a feller what works in dat house," said Tom. "He's a chum of mine. I just wanted to know something about the folks he lives wit'."

"Well, dey're a queer bunch, I tell you," said the boy, "but all the same they've got the rocks. Slathers of money! You ought to see Mr. Stevenson's new automobile."

And with that the fisher-boy hurried away.

Tom began to wonder if after all he had not been mistaken when he thought he saw Dan go the way that iron door.

But he determined to persevere even at the risk of getting himself into trouble.

So he went into the yard and passed all around Mr. Stevenson's house, to find it closed on all sides, while the grounds around it wore a neglected look.

There was a back gate here and a path leading down the side of the bank into the hollow.

This Tom descended and once more came up against the iron door.

"Dis is where dey tuk him. I'm dead sure of it," thought Tom, returning to his original conviction.

"I only wish I could get de blame t'ing open. Mebbe I'd find out somet'ing then. I'm blame sure Dan is in dat big house. He has a right to tell me what all dis means, even if dere is a goil into it."

There was a big ring attached to the iron door, and Tom pulled on it.

The door shook. The lock seemed loosely fastened.

Tom looked all around to see if he could not find a piece of wire.

He had picked locks before now—not with any evil intent—and he thought he would like to try his luck with this one.

And after prowling about the hollow for awhile, sure enough he did find a piece of wire. With it he went to work on the lock.

It proved to be what Tom termed "dead easy." In a moment the iron door swung outward, revealing, instead of a tomb with its coffins, a flight of wooden steps ascending through an arched opening in the side of the hill.

"Goes up to de house," thought Tom. "Do I want to go any furder? I don't know."

He hesitated, but could hear nothing.

"If I get ketched by a cop it's bound to make me all kinds of trouble," thought Tom. "All de same I believe I'll risk it, for I'm bound to know what's got Dan."

The fact was he had caught the detective fever, a dangerous disease for some people, especially a boy.

So Tom snaked out and took a look for the cop.

There was none in sight.

As we have said before, it was not as much built up around that section as it is now and cops were as few and far between as houses.

Tom dodged inside the vault again and, pulling the door shut, struck a match and began groping his way up the dark stairs, which grew narrower as he advanced.

They ended up against a door made of solid oak, a heavy, ancient-looking arrangement.

Tom tried it gently and found it fast.

"Dis is de end of my rope, I guess," he muttered. "I better sneak back. All de same I'm dead sure dis is de way Dan came."

He bent down, applied his ear to the keyhole and listened.

At once he caught sounds which told him that there was somebody on the other side of that door.

It sounded as if somebody was stirring something in a dish; then somebody began to whistle a lively air—the latest thing.

Suddenly a pounding began and it was owing to this and the fact that Tom continued to listen that he failed to hear what he otherwise must have heard, footsteps ascending the stairs.

But if he did not hear, Tom presently saw.

It was the flash of an electric pocket lamp.

He pulled away from the door in a hurry.

His heart beat wildly as he caught the sound of the approaching footsteps.

"Gee! I'm up against it now," muttered the boy. "Dis is de time I get ketched."

What to do he did not know, nor had there been any time to ponder over the problem, for now a bright looking young man appeared on the steps, lighting his way by an electric flash-lamp.

"Ha, you young thief!" he cried. "This, then, is the explanation of the door being open."

He made a pounce at Tom and got him by the collar.

Our driver was thoroughly frightened.

"Lemme go!" he gasped. "I hain't no thief! It's all a mistake."

He tried to wriggle out of the young man's grasp, but in vain.

Tom was held with an iron hand.

Meanwhile his captor knocked on the door in a peculiar way.

"Billy, let me in!" he shouted. "I've got a sneak thief here. Can't work my key."

Immediately the door was opened by a second young man with a particularly bright face.

"Say, Bart, do you know I thought I heard someone fumbling about out there!" he said. "This explains it. Did you catch him on the stairs?"

"Caught him right here by the door. He seems to have opened the door below with a bit of wire. I always thought that lock unsafe."

"In with you!" he added, and he gave Tom a push into a large room, closing the door behind him.

The driver of 88 was now pretty thoroughly frightened.

The station house seemed to loom up large before him.

"Say, gents," he gasped, "it's all a mistake. I can explain dis. Honest, I can."

The room was fitted up in a style well calculated to get on the nerves of an ignorant boy.

There were queer pieces of small machinery scattered about.

On one side was a little furnace with an open pot boiling on it.

Along another wall was a long workbench littered with bottles, flasks, and so on.

On a rack behind this were all sorts of bottles and jars filled with liquids and solids.

It looked to Tom like a drug store. Actually, it was a chemist's laboratory, but as the boy had never been in such a place he did not understand.

"Explain if you can, then," said Bart. "What possible excuse had you for picking the lock of that iron door and sneaking up those stairs?"

"I was lookin' for a feller," faltered Tom.

"Looking for a feller?" sneered Bart. "That will do for you. What fellow now?"

"Me runnin' mate on 88."

"88 what? Come, come, speak up!"

"Delivery wagon, Mammoth Store!" blurted Tom. "He's Dan Dugan. Dey brung him in here last night."

(To be continued.)

A FEW GOOD ITEMS

DESTROY HUGE MARINE TURTLE.

The huge marine turtle commonly known as the leather jacket, captured by E. J. Dean off Gay Head, Mass., did not take well to confinement, and it was found necessary to destroy it. Significant parts were retained for museum purposes. This leather jacket turtle had only been exceeded by one taken in a fish trap at Woods, Hole, Mass., about 1891, which weighed 1,400 pounds.

The leather jacket taken by Dean had become entangled in a line attached to a lobster pot. The length of the top shell was 5 feet and the total length was 7 feet 7 inches. The turtle measured in girth 7 feet lacking half an inch, the distance between the anterior limbs when spread was 7 feet 8 inches, and the estimated weight was 750 pounds.

BARE-KNEED GIRLS BARRED.

The girls of the Lakeview High School, Chicago, must cover their knees with their stockings, according to the edict issued by B. Frank Brown, the Principal.

Six girls appeared the other day with their knees bare, stockings rolled down half way to the ankles, all of which proceeding, according to the pupils of the school that fathered the idea of uniform dress for the daughters of millionaires and poor men, was decidedly beyond the boundary of good taste.

"Their bare knees were silly," said the boys in the school, whose own knees were bound up securely in military parties.

"It was scandalous," said the Principal. "The girls in this school disapprove of fancy dress. They forbid the use of rouge and they ostracize any girl who tries to 'vamp.' Bare knees astonished and scandalized the class. The six have promised to be good."

HILL HOME UNDER PROSECUTION ACT

Alton, Mo., Oct. 21.—A criminal action for perjury was filed against the keeper of the Gun Key lighthouse on the western edge of the Great Bahama Bank, about sixty miles off Miami, and the Register in Chancery to sell at public outcry "the blazed-face, glass-eyed bay horse" in executing a decree of the court that said "blazed-faced, glass-eyed horse" and the buggy and harness attached to him were contraband within the meaning of an act "to further suppress the evils of intemperance."

According to the condemnation proceedings filed by the State, one Jim Banks, a negro exhorter and keeper of the Gun Key lighthouse, had the purpose of transporting "cawn" liquor along the highways of Jefferson County, and it was seized while being so used.

Banks denied ownership of the outfit and denied that he knew anything about the transporting of

"moonshine liquor" alleged to have been carried, and said that he used the horse and buggy only for his religious work in the rural communities.

The court held that Banks probably used the horse and buggy "religiously," but held also that the word was capable of meanings other than the spreading of the Gospel. The horse was sold for \$23—probably less than the value of the liquor he hauled, in these times of the high cost of liquor.

FOX THAT DANCED

The first fox that has ever danced the fox-trot made his debut at the Hotel St. Francis, San Francisco, lately. His effort precipitated a near riot.

The fox, which had been sent to Chief Clerk Harry Boyle by Prof. Audrey Chatain of Chicago, a St. Francis guest who recently went to the Yosemite, was left in the check room. When Boyle picked up the box to take the fox home, the bottom fell out.

The fox jumped a counter four feet high and dashed into the Borgia room among the dancers, who at the moment were swaying to the tune of "Take Your Girlie to the Movies."

Across the floor the fox scampered, brushing the ankles of several female Terpsichores, who held their partners in a deathlike grip and screamed. The music jazzed on. It was a half hour later before the fox was cornered.

ADRIFT FIVE DAYS.

Edward Williams, who as the keeper of a British lighthouse on the isolated coral ridge called Gun Key, on the western edge of the Great Bahama Bank, about sixty miles off Miami, might claim legitimately the title of Captain, arrived recently by the Mallory liner San Marcos, from Galveston, an involuntary but mighty happy passenger. He did not come from Galveston, but from the open sea, where, alone, he had been tossed about for five dreary days. He was pretty feeble through lack of food when the lookout on the bridge of the San Marcos sighted him, a mere speck on the horizon, waving something that on closer inspection proved to be a shirt.

He was taken aboard with the help of a line. He explained he was one of the keepers of the Gun Key lighthouse and was going from the mainland to relieve his mate on October 18, when a storm came up. He kept the boat's head to it for a time, but it was a much bigger blow than he had expected and he finally became weary and drifted 200 miles into the open sea.

He sighted vessels of many sorts in the five days he was adrift, but the San Marcos was the only one that sighted him.

INTERESTING ARTICLES

NEW DIAMOND FIELD.

Much excitement has been caused in the lower Rio Grande border region over the report that a diamond field has been discovered at Zapata, Tex. Charles Harris of Boston, Mass., and associates have organized the Rancho de los Cristales Mining Company, with a capital stock of \$200,000, for the purpose of making a thorough exploration of a 100-acre tract of land for diamonds. Sam T. Foster of Brownsville, a well known mining engineer, is interested with Mr. Harris in the venture. It is noteworthy that no geological survey of the 150-mile strip of hills that border the lower course of the Rio Grande has ever been made. It is from these hills that many rare and curious crystals have been found from time to time.

MUCH COAL IN COLOMBIA.

Should the projected railroad from Cartagena to Ayapel, traversing the length of the Department of Boliver, become a reality, writes Vice Consul S. J. Fletcher from Cartagena, a direct means of transportation for the immense deposits of coal in the San Jorge River District would enable the fuel to be sold at \$5 a ton at this principal port of Colombia.

At Playa Rica the coal extends along the bank of the San Jorge River for eighteen miles and is so close to the surface that the veins can be clearly seen. The first shipment from this district was taken out by the steamer Magangue recently and was made possible only by the extremely high waters and the use of dynamite in clearing the passage. It is estimated that an expenditure of from \$10,000 to \$15,000 would place the stream in navigable condition for river steamers.

BRITISH CAPTAIN'S GALLANTRY.

The German four-masted bark Paul, believed to have foundered with all on board in mid-Atlantic, when calls for help either could not or would not be answered by passing vessels, arrived recently, the first German craft to enter Halifax, N. S., since the outbreak of the war. She left Hamburg Oct. 18.

She brought with her a tale of misery endured at sea that was ended by the gallantry of the captain of a British steamship, whose former vessel had been torpedoed and sunk by a German submarine and her life-boats fired upon.

The Paul is commanded by Capt. Wulf Krueger, pilot of a German submarine that operated in the North Sea during the war. His craft passed through several gales. Her sails were torn to tatters and her masts carried away. Passing ships

refused to take her in tow, and when the fate of her crew seemed to be sealed the British steamship Manchester Merchant came along, and Capt. Musgrave sent out wireless calls and gave other assistance.

Capt. Krueger brought his disabled craft to port without proper charts and was ignorant of the coast.

DEER SLAUGHTERED TO FURNISH PERFUME.

Musk, the basis of most strong perfumes, comes from the interior of China and Thibet, whence about 30,000 ounces are exported every year. It is the secretion of a gland of the male musk deer, a small, sturdy, hornless animal that is hunted in the mountains at altitudes of more than 8,000 feet.

From Tachienlu, the principal port of export, about 2,000 catties of musk are exported annually, averaging twenty-two pods to the catty. As each pod represents one deer, at least 44,000 male deer must have been killed to furnish this amount. But, as the deer are caught in traps, many does and fawns, which contain no musk, are killed uselessly. A writer in the North China Daily News, quoted by the Scientific American, estimates that the annual slaughter is really about 100,000 head.

Each pod contains a piece of musk about the size of a walnut. It is worth ten times its weight in silver, so buyers have to be on their guard against the slightest adulteration.

CHICAGO HOTEL CUTS RATES.

Patrons of the Hotel La Salle, Chicago, Ill., were elated when they learned that the management, in order to offset the high cost of living, had substantially cut the price of nearly every item on the menu, reductions ranging from 50 cents to 10 cents a portion. The regular \$1.10 hotel luncheon was reduced from \$1 to 75 cents.

"The idea," said Ernest J. Stevens, Vice President and Manager of the La Salle, "is that somebody had to start the job of bringing down the high cost of living. We have had a good year—a splendid year, and we are prepared now to operate the hotel at cost for the next two or three months if by so doing we may offer a moral protest against profiteering."

"In addition to cutting prices on the menu, we have also reduced room rates, the reductions ranging from \$3 a room to 75 cents."

"I know that you can't afford to do it—we can't, for supplies are still going up."

THEY WERE ALL READY FOR THE PIRATES.

By Kit Clyde.

"I've knocked about a bit in my time," said Charles Miller, a white-headed old Jack Tar, who leaned heavily on a crutch, "and I've seen some things on land and sea which were too deep for my grapping-irons. I went out to Australia in the sixties as a foremast hand on a British ship. I shipped for the voyage, but bad food and worse treatment so disgusted me that when we arrived at Melbourne I took French leave, and for that matter the bulk of the crew was ahead of me. After making two or three coast voyages, I brought up at Sydney and engaged for a trading voyage to the Northwest after sandalwood, spices, and the likes of that. I shipped on a small schooner called the Sparrow, the master of which was an Englishman named Davidson. There were seven of us all told, and we were loaded with a trading cargo. We had axes, hoes, hatchets, shovels, nails, wire, cloths, trinkets, whisky, shoes, muskets, powder and shot, clothing, and almost everything else you can think of. We had two cannon mounted on deck, with a supply of small arms, and the captain made no secret of the fact that we might have use for them. You see we were to round Cape York, which I calculate is the north point of Australia, and there bear up for Borneo. While the waters in that direction are a part of the Indian Ocean, you hear of the Java Sea, the Banda Sea, the Arafura Sea, and several other seas, and there are enough straits, islands, and channels to turn the head of the average captain. The Venture, as I understood it, belonged to parties in Sydney, though I think the captain had a small financial interest.

"As we bore up we passed between the Timor Land and the Aroo Islands and made the Banda Sea, and then navigation became more difficult. The sea is dotted with islands and reefs, and we had plenty to do to keep clear of them. We sighted a few sail, but got no alarm until well into Banda waters. Then, one afternoon, we made out a strange-looking craft to the north of us which had evidently come out from some port or bay along the chain of islands between us and the New Guinea coast. Though she had the wind with her she was in no hurry to close in. The captain suspected her from the first, and there wasn't a man of us who did not give his promise to go down with the schooner rather than fall into the hands of the pirate. She came down on a diagonal course to cut us off, and at sundown, when the captain went aloft with his glass for a look at her, she was so near that he could make out enough to bring him down with face as white as a new flying-jib.

"It's no use to deceive ourselves," he said, as we gathered around him. "The fellow means mischief.

While he has no cannon, he has men enough to eat us up in case he can put them aboard."

"As for getting away from him, we had seen that he could easily outsail us; and, too, the wind was rapidly dying out. In half an hour more we were lying becalmed, and as night came down the fellow was within a mile and a half of us. Every one of us knew enough about those native crafts to know that this chap could be worked down to us by means of oars or sweeps, and there was no doubt that he would come. We got the big guns over on the starboard side, placed the muskets and cutlasses handy, and the cook was ordered to keep a hot fire in the galley and give us all the hot water possible. We knew that most of the pirates would be barefooted, and we hunted up all the old bottles aboard and took all the glassware from the pantry and broke the articles on deck. The broken glass would inflict savage wounds on their bare feet. You see we did not mean to be taken without having done our best, and it was understood among us that, sooner than have hands laid on us, we'd go overboard to the sharks. Capture would mean death anyhow.

"Well, when we'd done all we could in the way of preparation, and when each man thoroughly understood what was expected of him as the attack began, we had nothing to do but wait. He could sweep down to us in the course of an hour, much to our surprise, he did not appear when the hour was up. The captain's night glass had been broken by accident, and we had no means of knowing what the fellow was about. The night was not over dark, and we counted on having him in sight for four or five minutes before he could lay us aboard. A second hour dragged away, and still no sign. Then a third went, and the men began to be nervous. The mate suggested to the captain that we provision the yawl and abandon the vessel; and if the idea had been backed by the crew I think it would have been carried out. You see, the waiting had upset the mate, though he was a brave man. I think the captain was a bit rattled, but he had made up his mind to save his schooner or go down with her.

"A third hour passed, then a fourth, and then we began to believe that we had been fooled. The stranger was a native trader, who meant us no harm, and the crowd of people on his decks might be islanders who were being transferred from one island to another. The captain acknowledged that he had been too quick in his conclusions, and as midnight came the off watch turned in with many a joke on the way we had been fooled. I was on watch when daylight came. Naturally enough, we had an eye out for the trader, and as the gray mists lifted we got a surprise. In the quarter where we had seen him the previous night, but not more than a mile away, there was a great heap of wreck stuff on the smooth surface of the sea, but no trader. The captain was soon on deck with his glass, and

when he had taken a look at the wreckage he announced it to be the remains of the trader. A boat was lowered, and two of us pulled the mate to the spot. There were spars, planks, timbers, cordage, furniture and other articles mixed up in a helter-skelter way. It might be compared to a house which had been blown down by a hurricane. Among the wreckage we found dead bodies, though the sharks took them before we had made a close inspection. The hull of the craft was not there, but there were many bottom planks, a portion of the rudder, and all her sails and cordage.

"You will ask what had happened, but I cannot answer you with any satisfaction. The trader or pirate had been wrecked, but not on the rocks nor by wind or explosion. We had heard no noise from her during the night. Planks and beams were broken and shattered in a strange way, and none of us had the same theory about it. What do I think? Well, sir, I believe that the fellow was a pirate, and that he was working down to us when a whale rose under him. His craft was a light one, and the blow was enough to completely wreck it. If you have any better theory I shall be glad to accept it."

JESSE POMEROY 43 YEARS IN PRISON.

Jesse Pomeroy, the Dorchester murderer, who is serving his forty-third year in the Charlestown state prison, to-day observed his sixtieth birthday within the prison walls. He received several post-cards and a birthday cake.

Warden Elmer E. Shattuck was the first person to offer congratulations. Pomeroy thanked the warden, adding that he never had expected to live so long.

The prisoner, decrepit and nearly blind, did his usual day's work, that consists principally of picking papers off the prison grass plots, but he spent most of the day poring over the Bible that has been his chief solace since the death of his mother, Mrs. Ruth Pomeroy, five years ago.

Pomeroy was seventeen when he entered Charlestown prison, September 9, 1876. He had been a criminal since his eleventh year, and was a reformatory inmate from 1872 to 1874. In the latter year a series of crimes against children terrorized South Boston and Dorchester. Several school children were attacked, and finally two were murdered.

A cast in one of Pomeroy's eyes played the chief part in fastening on him responsibility for the crimes, for numbers of little children had told of being frightened by "the big boy with the white eye." Pomeroy confessed to the murders and was sentenced to be hanged. On account of his youth Governor Price commuted the sentence, prescribing, however, a rigorous solitary confinement as even "a fitter punishment for a fiend incarnate."

For forty-one years Pomeroy lived in a tiny cell. For thirty-six he saw only the keepers and his

mother. He spent his hours in tireless study to avoid going mad. Since entering the prison he has mastered seven languages and acquired a wide knowledge of law.

He has made twelve attempts to escape, all failures. For the last, in December, 1912, he was "punished" by being deprived of his books and was put on a bread and water diet for a short time.

But with age he has lost his spirit of defiance. Things of the outside world no longer interest him. He prefers to read his Bible and his law books, and is hard at work on Arabic, hoping to add this language to his repertory before his dimming eyes fail entirely.

HOW SEA-LIONS HELPED TO WIN THE WAR.

In the late months of the war some wild stories were published to the effect that the British naval authorities were training sea lions to catch German submarines. Of course this was ridiculous, but the story was based upon a fact, and that fact has only just been revealed.

It was at the recent meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, when Sir Charles Parsons, the President, delivered an address on Science in War and Peace. In it he described the development of the binaural hydrophone, with which submarines are located by the sound they make. Early in the game it was discovered that the first forms of these instruments were useless when the vessel bearing them was in motion or when the sea was rough, because the noises made by the vessel's motion and by the waves drowned the noise of the submarine. This is where the sea lions came in.

Sir Richard Paget, the eminent biologist, made experiments to learn how far these interesting animals could hear under water and at what speed their directional hearing ceased. These proved that the directional hearing of the lions was good up to six knots an hour.

Dr. Arthur Keith informed the naval experimenters that whales' ears are too small to receive sound waves in the usual way, but that the animals heard under water by the transmission of sound waves through the bones of the head.

Now, the whale's organ of hearing resembles the hydrophone. So the design of this was changed, and those used in the last year of the war were hollow bodies in the form of fish or porpoises, made of celluloid, varnished canvas or thin metal, filled with water and towed by the ship. The hydrophone was fixed in the head, and the towing cable carried the insulated wire leads to the telephone receivers of the observer on board the vessel. These were towed some distance behind the ship, thus losing most of the noise made by the swift motion of this, and it was found that they registered directional sounds when traveling through the water at speeds of fourteen knots and at considerable distances.

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GOOD CURRENT NEWS ARTICLES

The largest coffin ever made in Iowa was turned out on a special order by a local coffin company in Burlington, Ia. It was for the corpse of a 600-pound woman, resident of Albia. The coffin weighed 700 pounds and was large enough to hold six average sized men.

What is said to be the first wildcat ever captured alive in Sussex County, New Jersey, is on exhibition in the window of a hardware store in Newton. Fred Benson, a hunter, came upon the cat while it was swimming in a pool. He threw a bag over it. The wildcat is as large as an ordinary dog.

James B. Logan, a traffic officer of Redwood City, Colo., heard a whimpering from his front porch. He went out to investigate, believing he would find a baby, for the whimpering was strangely like that of an infant. On the porch was a basket and in the basket carefully wrapped in woollens the "baby." It was a baby Bengal tiger. No one knows where it came from, and Logan wonders what he is going to do with it.

Credit for the invention of the depth charge, that proved to be such an effective weapon at sea during the World War, is given to Chester T. Minkler, of the Newport, torpedo station, in a letter from the Navy Department to Capt. Martin E. Tamm, U. S. N., inspector of ordnance at the station, according to a dispatch from Newport to the Associated Press. Mr. Minkler is reported as having turned over all his patents for the invention to the government without exact compensation of demanding other considerations. Experiments with the depth charge were made in New York during the recent peril to the inventor, it is said.

What makes a long period? Surely it is inactivity. During the war long, many soldiers and others

leges followed popular boys? These young leaders were the manly boys whose hearts could be trusted. The boy who respects his mother has leadership in him. The boy who is careful of his sister is a knight. The boy who will never violate his word, and who will pledge his honor to his own hurt and change not, will have the confidence of his friends. The boy who will never hurt the feelings of any one will one day find himself possessing all sympathy. If you want to be a popular boy, be too manly and generous and unselfish to seek to be popular; be the soul of honor; love others better than yourself, and people will give you their hearts and try to make you happy. This is what makes a boy popular.

GRINS AND CHUCKLES

"Why is a gun like a cat?" asked the conundrum fiend. "I dunno," replied the victim. "Because they both go off." "But there's a difference." "What is it?" "The cat comes back."

His Daughter's Beau—I—er—er want to ask you, sir, for your—er—er daughter's hand, sir. Her Father—I'm not disposing of her in sections, but I'm willing to listen to any proposition involving all of her, sir.

School Teacher—Now, children, our lessons today gives us some idea of the power of a king and other potentates. Can any of you name a still greater power? Little Fred—Yes, ma'am; an ace is more powerful than a king.

Good Minister—I am exceedingly gratified at the wonderful increase in the attendance of men at our Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday evening prayer-meetings. For the past three weeks the church has been thronged with men. His Wife—It's house-cleaning time.

"Well, Rastus, I hear you are working again. What business are you engaged in?" "I'se done be engaged in de mining business, sah." "What kind of mining are you doing: gold, silver, or diamond?" "I'se kalsomining, sah."

"Did you get anything?" whispered the burglar on guard as his pal emerged from the window. "No. The bloke what lives here is a lawyer," replied the other, in disgust. "That's hard luck," said the first. "Did you lose anything?"

Pat, being on his holidays was one day strolling through the streets of London, when he saw the figure of a man standing before a shop. There was a card pinned to the man's coat, on which was written: "Broke to \$1.95." Pat, however, carelessly passed the figure, and exclaimed: "Broke to \$1.95."

ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST

KINDNESS COSTLY.

Kindness to animals has cost Jack Mills of Clarks Mills, Pa., a cool \$175. A short time ago he found a female ferret on his farm. It was so tame that he took it to his home and cared for it. Several days later it presented him with a family of six little ferrets. A complaint was filed against him by Game Warden Gruver, charging the keeping of ferrets contrary to the State law. He was fined \$25 and costs for each ferret in his possession.

In justifying his action Gruver declared that "it has been noted each rabbit season that hunters had in their possession great quantities of rabbits that defied all search for shot marks."

SUNDAY MOVING PICTURES OFFICIALLY APPROVED.

Secretary of War Baker refused to discountenance the giving of moving picture and theatrical performances on Sundays, in a letter to Senator Swanson of Virginia, who transmitted resolutions of the Elizabeth City and County Ministerial Union protesting against Sunday performances in army theatres at Fort Monroe. The Secretary said: "I do not believe that the entertainment should be discontinued on Sundays because its discontinuance would in many cases cause officers and soldiers to seek means of recreation that would not be morally equal to that supplied within the army."

A NEW REINFORCED WATER PROOF PAPER.

For years inventors have been trying to make untearable or reinforced paper, some patents dating back to 1875, but the manufacturing costs were always too high. There was one, however, that looked right and research proved it was. You can punch holes in it, but, being reinforced with twine, the hole doesn't travel. And it was a neat turn to make it waterproof. It is, in short, a cotton reinforced, water-proofed, kraft paper. It can be made stiff and hard or creped and soft and thick or thin, just as you please. On completion of the small factory tests we were asked to manage the company and this we continue to do, says an American prominent in research work.

The principal use is to take the place of burlap, which is difficult to get at any price now. Textile manufacturers use it for wrapping goods. With burlap they have to protect the fibres first with one or more layers of paper to keep out dust, oil and water and then wrap it with burlap for strength. This does all.

And it has many other uses. Packing house people cover the ends of barrels of provisions with it, which requires a great variety. And mobile

tire makers wind tires with two-inch strips of it for shipment and storage. A Western maker of buggies also uses strips for winding his shafts to protect them during shipment. We have made a soft and very warm vest for soldiers, and large quantities for wrapping surgical dressings for the Red Cross. Some further developments are full of promise.

PAINTED SOLES OUTWEAR UPPERS.

Painting the soles of shoes will preserve the leather a long time. F. W. Charles of Seattle sends the *Scientific American* the following instructions as to doing it. He says they are the result of much experimentation.

"For a pair of shoes that have the shiny dressing worn off the soles, put on three coats of paint—ordinary hard finish black paint will do—allowing each coat to dry forty-eight hours before applying the next paint. That is all there is to it.

"If the shoes are new, with the sole dressing intact so that the paint will not penetrate, doughen the surface with fine sandpaper. The paint will soon wear off the soles, but that which has penetrated the leather will remain and continue to perform its good offices. Repeat the process once each season and soles will cease to worry you; the life of your shoes will be measured by that of the uppers—and this will be greatly prolonged by the elimination of the half-soling process, with its great wear and tear on the edges of the soft leather.

"In proof of all this, I can cite a pair of Oxfords which I am now wearing for the third summer. The heels are slightly worn, but they were never painted. I may say, as further evidence of what this showing means, that I walk about for some fourteen or fifteen hours per day."

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ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST

PERSONAL

GUS—Hilda is very ill owing to your absence from home. Return. Everything will be forgiven. Write, letting us know how you are.—M. W.

Two Californians have patented a device that measures a pipeful of tobacco from a pouch or box and stuffs it into a pipe without contact with a user's fingers.

Pencils are very skilfully constructed. When the column of graphite has been prepared for use in the pencil it is laid in a slit cut for it, covered with another piece of wood, which is glued on; then, by means of ingenious machinery the wooden covers are reduced to the proper size for pencils, and painted or varnished and set aside to dry.

The fecundity of the domestic fly is remarkable. Each female housefly lays about one hundred and twenty eggs, and each egg is hatched and produces a perfect fly in less than three weeks. If a calculation from these facts is made, it will be found that it is quite possible that a single female fly may be the progenitor of twenty-five million descendants in the course of one summer.

In an ancient cemetery just discovered near Mesa Rica, N. M., about 200 miles from Las Vegas, the bones of a giant were unearthed. The forearm is four feet long, and in the lower jaw are teeth which range from the size of a hickory nut to that of a large walnut.

ROBBERS OVERLOOK \$100,000 IN BANK.

Three bandits who held up employees of the savings bank in Royal Oak, Mich., took \$25,000 in currency and Liberty Bonds, but overlooked \$100,000 on the shelves of the vault, officers of the bank announced. The robbers escaped in an automobile.

PEARLS IN OYSTERS.

Forrest Wilson, of Beloit, Wis., bought a quart of oysters for 59 cents. When eating them he bit on something hard and found it to be a pearl. A few seconds later his son had a similar experience. The stones had not been cooked enough to harm them. The largest one is worth \$50 and the smaller one \$10, making \$60 in two bites.

Zoos in all the big cities of the world are inquiring for mon-

keys, lions, elephants, snakes, giraffes and scores of other specimens of the animal and reptile world. In Germany some elephants were eaten, as were hippopotamuses, during the worst period of food shortage. Scarcity of food or scarcity of the proper sort depleted practically every menagerie in Europe.

EXCELLENT FLOUR FROM CAT-TAILS.

Prof. P. W. Claassen of Cornell University has recently called attention to a hitherto neglected source of food—viz., the common cat-tail of our marshes, says the *Scientific American*. It appears that the Indians made flour from the rootstalks of the cat-tail, but for some reason white men did not adopt this item of the Indian dietary as they did maize and potatoes.

There are thousands of acres of cat-tail marshes in the United States. Prof. Claassen finds that an acre of cat-tail yields a total dry weight of rhizomes amounting to about 10,800 pounds. From this it is possible to obtain 3,500 pounds of flour. This flour is found, on analysis, to contain approximately the same amount of protein as rice and corn flours, but the ash content approximates that found in potato, cassava and dasheen flours.

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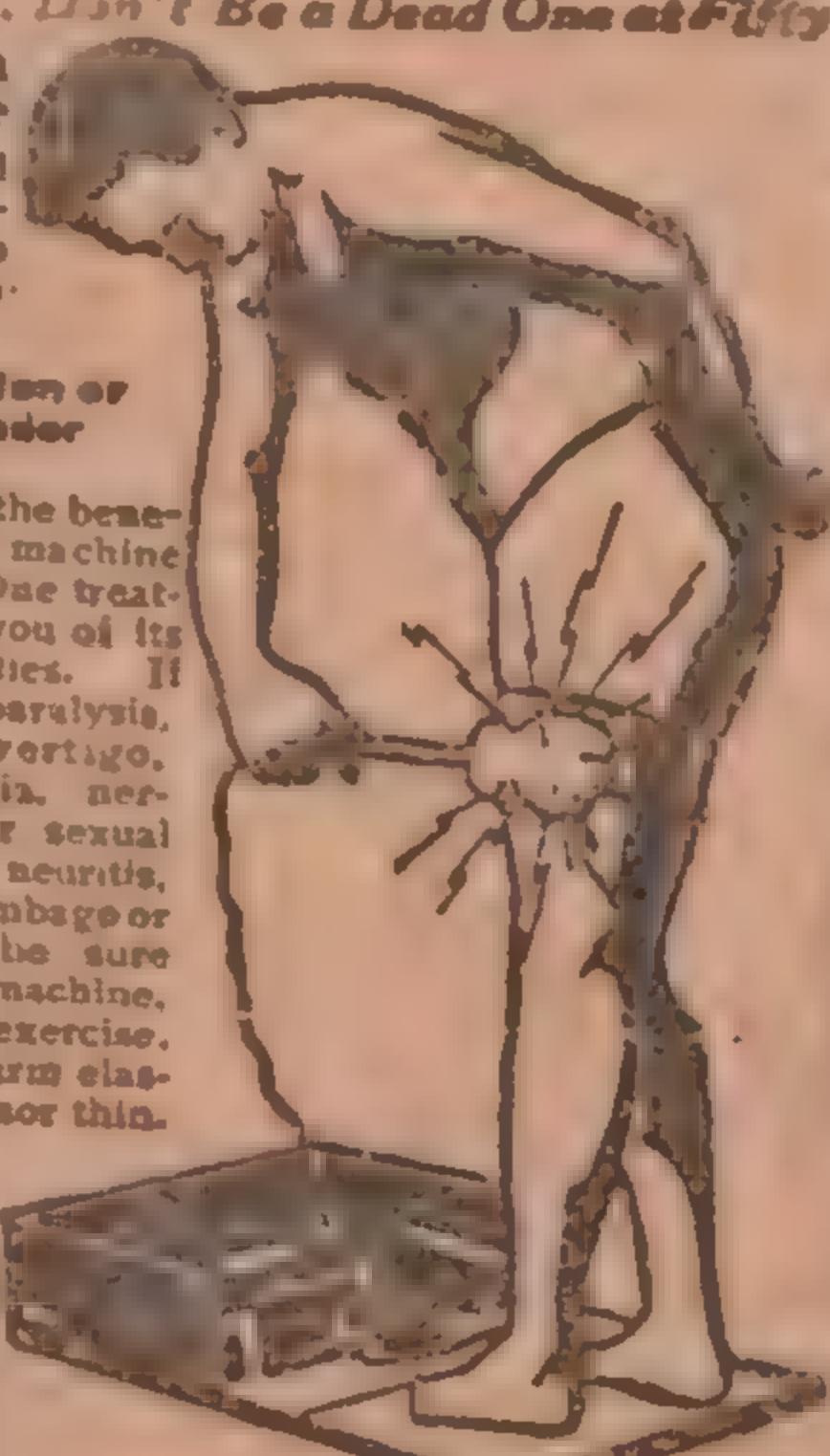
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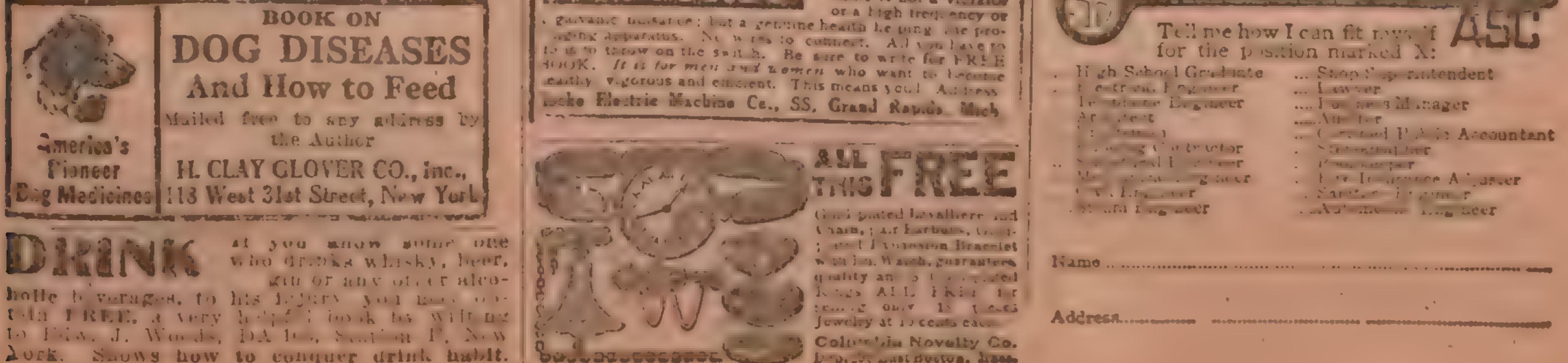
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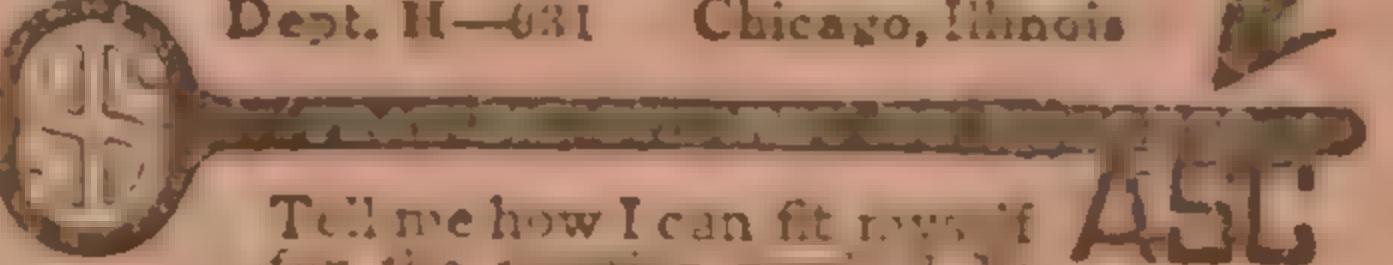
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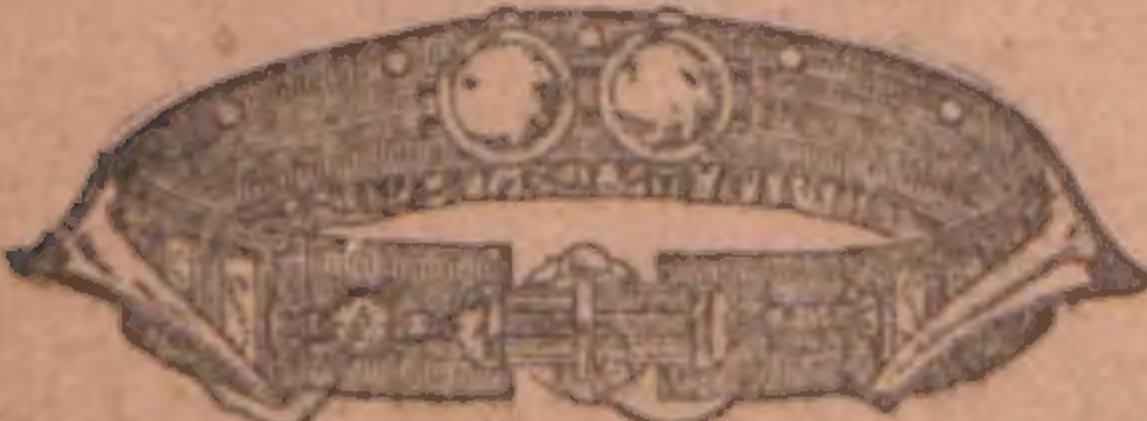
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